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NOVEMBER, 1965

December Ready-for-YOUth Resources

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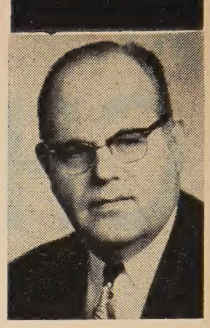
MEXICAN INTERMEDIATES ENJOY CONVENTION FOGATA

ESFUERZO CRISTIANO

BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY



Harold E. Westerhoff

ESFUERZO CRISTIANO

One of the joys of working in the larger areas of Christian Endeavor is seeing it at work in many situations and in settings not like those in which we find it working in the English-speaking areas of the world. In Mexico and in the other Spanish-speaking countries, Christian Endeavor becomes Esfuerzo Cristiano. The familiar "For Christ and the Church" becomes "Por Cristo Y Por Su Iglesia." The opening service of a convention becomes the Servicio de Apertura. And the roll call becomes Pase de Lista. And all of it is so beautiful and wonderful in the Spanish language.

A unique experience was mine recently when I attended the VIII National Mexican Christian Endeavor Convention in ancient, yet contemporary, Coyoacan (the gathering place of the wolves), on the outskirts of Mexico City. While my Spanish was weak their bienvenida (welcome) was strong. And the schedule was heavy and busy enough to fell anyone who might be weaker than a strong, evangelical Mexican Christian.

Rev. Saul Tijerina, of Monterrey, permanent secretary of the General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, must be the indispensable man to Christian Endeavor in Mexico. Seldom has there been a man in top leadership of this movement with such a variety of abilities. He was equally potent as an inspirational speaker, a Bible lecturer, a parliamentarian, a counselor to youth. He was everywhere.

A helpful series of morning times was led by Dr. David Macias, host pastor. He dealt with *The Bible of Today, The Christ of Today,* and *The Church of Today.* The Macias family has had an unbroken relationship to Christian Endeavor that spans three generations.

These enthusiastic Mexicans teach us a lesson in business handling too. Each Sesion De Negocios (business session), and there were five, was an experience in itself. A presiding officer has to be alive and alert. And they had them there, in the persons of Miss Lilia Susana Arjona, L., retiring president, and Carlos Castillo, newly elected president. Presbyterians in general claim to do things "decently and in order" and they did just that in Mexico.

The popular mass evangelistic meetings were addressed by some of the leading evangelicals in Mexico. The fun times were refreshing, attractive—and tipico, typical of the regions represented in the convention.

And there is a Christian Endeavor hymn in Spanish too, used lustily by Mexican Christian Endeavorers. Its chorus, beginning *Avanzad! Avanzad!* (Advance! Advance!) makes the rafters ring. Christian Endeavor can only advance South of the Border. The youth of Mexico, trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, have determined that it will advance.

November Notes

5-7 — Missouri Convention, Dexter

Contact: Mr. Harold Williams, 5942 Vivian Avenue, St. Louis 63147

26-29 — Hawaii Association Convention, Island of Kauai

Contact: Mrs. Mealii Kalama, 2110 Lodd Lane, Honolulu 96813

Pray for these Christian Endeavor activities!

Are you ready for
Christian Endeavor Week
January 30 - February 6, 1966?

COVER CLUES

The fun and song leader for the Fogata (outdoor bonfire celebration) got a ready response from delegates. This was one of many sessions during the National Mexican Convention September 14-19 in Mexico City. More photos on Page 3.

Photo by Daniel Vasquez

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR World

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Editor-in-Chief: DANIEL A. POLING

Editor: PHYLLIS I. RIKE

Associate Editor: BERT H. DAVIS

Ready-for-YOUth Resources Editor: CHRISTIAN A. TIRRE

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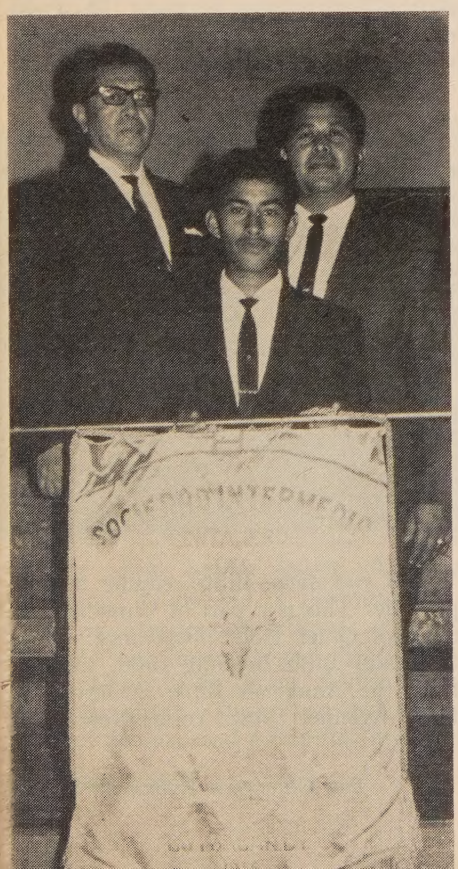
SCENES FROM THE CONVENTION—(Upper left) Harold E. Westerhoff, general secretary of the International Society, wears a Pepe hat at the Foclorica Fiesta when delegates demonstrated native costumes, songs, and dances. Lilia Susana Arjona Leyva (left) and her sister at right wear typical dress from Yucatan, while those standing next to Mr. Westerhoff display Tabasco dress. Delegates ate all meals together (above) at the Benito Juarez School operated by the Presbyterian Church in Coyoacan, suburb of Mexico City; convention sessions were held in nearby Gethsemani Presbyterian Church. There were 58 official delegates representing the 13 Presbytery unions, with approximately 125 Endeavorers coming from various areas and a maximum attendance at evening sessions of 300. Leading devotions (left) are Carlos Abraham Castillo from Nuevo Leone, the new president of the national union, and delegates from the Mayab and Campeche Presbytery unions. Three generations of Endeavorers (lower left) include Dr. David Macias, host pastor and former national union president and Presbyterian Church moderator; Professor David Macias S., also a former Mexican Union president; and David Macias C., leader of the Intermediate Society which is named "Messengers of the Master."

SOUTH OF THE BORDER 1965

Scenes from VIII Mexican National Convention September 14-19 in Mexico City

Photos by Daniel Vasquez



OUTGOING PRESIDENT Lilia Susana Arjona Leyva congratulates Carlos Castillo on his election (left); he is a student at the state university in Monterrey.

A symbolic chain of prayer (below) made up of all the official delegates brought the convention to a close with the Mizpah Benediction.

WANTED!

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR MEMBERS AND SOCIETIES

To witness for Christ and the Church in the area of citizenship
To participate in the 1966 Citizenship Awards Program

All youth in the United States and Canada who have not reached their 25th birthday by February 15, 1966, are wanted.

Must prepare a significant article, editorial, talk, poster, black and white photograph, or cartoon between May 31, 1965, and February 15, 1966—deadline for entries.

Each entry evaluated on basis of originality, excellence of literary or art form used, manner in which it implements the folder *What Is Christian Citizenship?* and Christian witness to the community.

All Christian Endeavor societies and similar youth groups in local churches in the United States and Canada are wanted. Majority of members of any society must be under 25 years of age.

Must sponsor and report a completed Christian citizenship activity begun after May 31, 1965. Deadline for entries is February 15, 1966.

Each activity evaluated on basis of group participation, goals established or achieved, the manner in which it implements the folder *What Is Christian Citizenship?* and Christian witness to the community.

REWARDS

First individual award—$150 in cash. Second—$100; third—$75; fourth—$50. Four runners-up—$25 each. Award plaques to top eight winners; Honor Certificates to all other qualified entrants.

First society award—$200 in cash. Second—$125; third—$100; fourth—$75. Four runners-up—$25 each. Award plaques to top eight winners; Honor Certificates to all other qualified entrants.

Contact Rev. Christian A. Tirre, Citizenship Director of the International Society of Christian Endeavor, if you have information about any individual or society interested in this opportunity.

Four Fabulous Weeks in 1966

Join Christian Endeavor's International Fellowship Vikingland Tour July 24 through August 21. Visit Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, West Berlin, and East Berlin. And view the many scenic and interest spots in between. Attend the great 15th World's Christian Endeavor Convention in Belfast, Northern Ireland, July 27 through August 1.

The all-expense, personally conducted tour will leave New York's International Airport by Pan American jet on Sunday evening, July 24, arriving back at New York by jet from Berlin on Sunday, August 21. The price—$1,585 at present published rates. A deposit of $200 will reserve a place. For further information contact Harold E. Westerhoff, Tour Director, International Society of Christian Endeavor, 1221 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43216.

Carrickfergus Castle near Belfast, a link with Ulster's stormy past. In its shadow John Paul Jones won America's first naval victory when his ship "Ranger" defeated the British naval vessel "Drake" during the American Revolution.

FAITH FOR A NEW AGE
1965 Worldwide Bible Reading

More than 20 million persons all over the world will participate this year in the Worldwide Bible Reading program of the American Bible Society.

Now in its 22nd year, this program is observed annually between Thanksgiving and Christmas as a spiritual bond to unite Christians around the world. Each day all persons participating read the same passage from the Bible.

NOVEMBER		
25	Thanksgiving	Psalm 1
26		Psalm 23
27		Psalm 27
28	1st Advent Sunday	Isaiah 9:2-7
29		Psalm 37
30		Psalm 46
DECEMBER		
1		Psalm 51
2		Psalm 91
3		Psalm 103
4		Psalm 121
5	2nd Advent Sunday beginning Universal Bible Week	Isaiah 40
6		Isaiah 53
7		Isaiah 55
8		Matthew 5
9		Matthew 6
10		Matthew 7
11		Luke 15
12	3rd Advent Sunday and Universal Bible Sunday	John 1:1-18
13		John 1:19-34
14		John 1:35-51
15		John 3
16		John 10
17		John 14
18		John 15
19	4th Advent Sunday	John 17

WORLDWIDE READING of the CHRISTMAS STORY

20		Romans 8
21		I Corinthians 13
22		Luke 1:5-25
23		Luke 1:26-38
24		Luke 1:39-80
25	Christmas	Luke 2:1-20

For the last six days of the year these passages are recommended.

26	Sunday	Luke 2:21-52
27		Matthew 1:18-24
28		Matthew 2:1-23
29		Ephesians 6
30		Philippians 4
31		Hebrews 11

Will you make Bible reading a daily practice? This is a part of Christian Endeavor's Quiet Hour observance. Write for "Daily Bible Reading 1966" (U156) from the American Bible Society, 450 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10022.

E NEWS AND VIEWS

AT THE GERMAN NATIONAL CONVENTION at Giessen, Rev. Arno Pagel (left), president of the German Union, shared the platform with guest speaker Rev. F. Rupert Gibson of Northern Ireland. Mr. Gibson is chairman of both the local committee and the program committee for the World's Convention in Belfast next year.

• THIS SUMMER Rev. F. Rupert Gibson of Belfast, Northern Ireland, spent twelve days in Germany. He attended their national convention at Giessen for four days and spoke to the large gathering of more than 6,000 Endeavorers in the great tent where it was held. He also traveled north as far as Lubeck, the Russian Zone and the Baltic Sea before the convention, addressing meetings in Bremen, Hamburg, and Hanover. After the convention Mr. Gibson went south and east as far as the Black Forest and spoke at meetings in Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Nuremberg. Mr. Gibson says:

"The presence of God was very evident at this outstanding convention. It was a particular thrill one evening to see over one hundred young people waiting at the end of the meeting to signify their intention of giving their lives to Christ. It was inspiring to see thousands of young people rededicating their lives in the service of Jesus Christ.

"It was a great joy to speak to Herr Bruno Draeger who directs the Tent Mission work. For this fine work of outreach the Endeavor movement has two tents, one holding six hundred and the other one thousand, which groups of young people use to proclaim the Gospel in many parts of the country."

• DR. JAMES W. EICHELBERGER, vice-president of the International Society and Secretary of Christian Education of the A.M.E. Zion Church, was honored August 29 in Arkansas. On that date the St. Ruth A.M.E. Zion Church of Little Rock, now under construction, changed its name to "Eichelberger A.M.E. Zion Church" in honor of this leader who has given 61 years of service in Christian education. Dr. Eichelberger has served in his present denominational position since 1932.

• THE RECORD ALBUM, "Daniel A. Poling—A Biography with Music" is available from the International Society—two long-playing 12" records, hi-fi, $6.95. A fine Christmas gift!

• KNOW YOUR AMERICA WEEK will be observed November 21-27. Overall theme is "It's Your Freedom—Help Defend It." This week is sponsored by the All-American Conference to Combat Communism. Endeavorers are urged to join with civic groups in this patriotic emphasis.

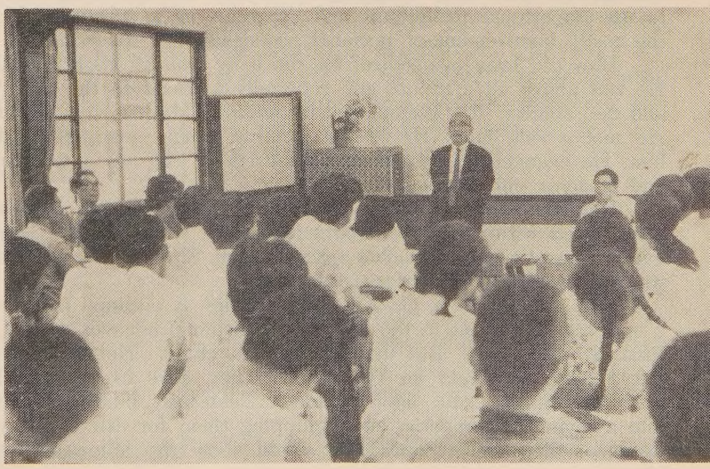
• SIX THOUSAND young people attended the annual German convention this summer, with guest delegates from other European countries, North and South America, and Africa. "You Will Be My Witnesses" was the convention theme. There are about 30,000 Christian Endeavorers in Germany.

• 11-11-11 MAY SOUND like a code, but it really marks the annual Mount Monadnock Climb sponsored by the Massachusetts Union at 11:00 a.m. on November 11.

Photo by C. Manley DeBevoise

THESE NEW YORK STATE ENDEAVORERS prove that Christian Endeavor is international and interracial as well as interdenominational. Posing at the Summer Assembly at Canandaigua are (from left) Alyssa Janet Chin, Edna B. Pinckney, Sonia Castro, Jeff Bertine, and John Sulahian. They represent China, Africa, Brazil, the United States, and Armenia, in that order.

JAPANESE ENDEAVORERS at the 18th High School Students Dedication Camp of West Japan (Kansai Area) listen to Kojiro Hata, chairman of the Japan Union and vice-president of the World's Union. The camp was held at Kitakomatsu on Lake Biwa at Doshisha Retreat House.



Ready - for - YOUth RESOURCES

WITNESSING AND WINNING YOUTH

By Rev. H. Norman Pell

The Latin American Mission made a study of the fastest growing movements on their field and found them to be three—the Communists, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Pentecostal Churches. Then they analyzed these movements to find their common denominator. Was it their message? Obviously not. Here were an anti-Christian ideology, an heretical cult, and a Christian group. Finally, they came up with this proposition: "The growth of any movement is in direct proportion to its ability to mobilize its entire membership for continuous evangelistic action." Based on this thesis, a program of "evangelism in depth" has been moving from country to country in Latin America, training, uniting, mobilizing ordinary Christians as never before, and making an unprecedented impact in the life of these nations.

The kind of evangelistic action to which Christian Endeavorers are called supremely is that of witnessing and winning non-Christian youth. This will stem from a first-hand encounter with the Risen Lord.

When our witness does not flow from the evangelical experience, we become like the baseball announcer in San Diego, California, who broadcasts descriptions of all games by the local baseball club. If the team is on the road, he gives a play-by-play description of the game fed to him from the other city. Suspended from the ceiling in the studio is a baseball bat. Near the announcer is a leather chair, and by his hand is the cane. When he hits the leather chair with a cane, it sounds exactly like a pitch thumping into the catcher's mitt. When he whacks the bat with the cane, it sounds exactly like the crack of a ball against a bat. The announcer turns the knob and the volume comes up on a record of stimulated crowd noise. If you are listening to the ball game by radio, you would vow the announcer is sitting behind home plate at the ball park. There is the brilliant description, the baseball jargon, the sounds of the game. You can almost smell the popcorn! It sounds real, but the announcer is talking about something he has not seen.

It is entirely possible for us to report the Christian life—with all the brilliant description, all the correct sounds, all the fine sounding jargon—and yet, unlike Peter, be describing things we have not seen and telling things we have not heard.

Stemming from a first-hand faith comes the desire to develop a strategy to reach non-Christian youth in our time. At all costs, we must avoid the "Gospel Blimp" mentality, as portrayed in Joseph Bayly's amusing but painful satire of some Christians who tried unsuccessfully to witness to their neighbors by a giant balloon festooned with Gospel texts. It is a constant temptation to use impersonal techniques and programs as a substitute for the costly involvement of personal friendship and concern.

How did Jesus evangelize? He did it by *loving* (Mark 2:16). He was above all a friend, and especially a friend to the needy and the "sinners." He evangelized by *serving* (Mark 1:34). When He met a sick man, He healed him; a hungry man, He fed him. He evangelized by *telling* (Mark 1:14). He was a teacher and preacher *par excellence.*

How did Jesus' disciples evangelize? They followed in His steps. Their witness was by *loving fellowship* (Acts 2:44). Their witness was by *compassionate service* (Acts 3:6). Their witness was by *faithful proclamation* (Acts 5:42).

The strategy Jesus gave to His disciples as outlined in Acts 2 and 3 is significant in the life of a Christian Endeavor society. First He said, "Go." But then He said in effect, "Not yet." He put a temporary veto on His orders. They were to wait until the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost, binding them into a divine *camaraderie,* and equipping them for extraordinary deeds of service. Not until they could show the fellowship of truth and demonstrate the deeds of truth, were they ready to speak the words of truth.

In a full and total witness to non-Christian youth, these three elements are basic:

1. *We must evangelize by the reality of our fellowship.* This is particularly meaningful in this modern world. Young people have tended to disregard old family ties and social securities have gone. They have lost their identity in rootless mobility, in the "anonymous living" of huge apartments, in the isolation of suburbia.

Jimmy Karam had been a leader in the Little Rock, Arkansas, race riots before his conversion. He was a successful owner of a clothing store in that city, a former football coach, the typical secular and unchurched man. To a church congregation Jimmy said wistfully, "You know, all my life I wanted to be like you, I wanted to be with nice, fine, respectable Christian people like you. But no one ever asked me. Everybody knew I was a sinner, and I didn't think they wanted Jimmy Karam in their churches." Is that the impression the non-Christian youth of your community would have of your Christian Endeavor society? We must start here—with the witness of fellowship.

2. We must also witness by the *compassion of our service.* In every community there are young people who have been dubbed "delinquents" by society. They are not merely lost, bad, and sinful; they are also lonely, bewildered, and suffering. We witness to our Lord, not only when we tell of His wonderful works, but when we strip ourselves as He did, and take a towel as He did, and wash dirty feet as He did. And if our service is not a "bribe" and not done in an attitude of condescending superiority, then the cup of cold water or the washing of dirty feet, may open the door of the heart to hear about the Cross.

3. Then, we witness and reach modern youth by *the faithfulness of our personal proclamation.* The fellowship and service cannot stand alone. Some Endeavorers say, "I don't speak, I just let my life speak." But how many of us feel that we are good enough to "let our lives speak"? Witnessing demands both good works and good words.

In a great missionary conference in the middle east, several days of planning for strategy had taken place. Finally, the great missionary in Persia, Dr. Van Ness, arose. "Brethren," he said, "I am sure this talk of strategy is always very good. But really we have only one strategy, telling people about Jesus!"

The Saturday Evening Post carried a cartoon at the time of the 1960 Olympics. It showed the runner from Marathon in the classic story, carrying the message of victory, come stumbling and gasping into the palace to fall prostrate before the king. A puzzled blank look was on his face as he mumbled, "I've forgotten the message."

All that effort and no message! God forbid that any Christian Endeavorer with such mighty opportunities will have to confess to non-Christian youth, "We have forgotten the message."

So whether by corporate fellowship, or by sacrificial service, or by personal testimony, we shall be saying to the youth of our generation, as Peter of old, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had (created this fellowship and performed this service) . . . the God of Abraham . . . hath glorified His Son, Jesus" (Acts 3:13).

Rev. H. Norman Pell is an associate evangelist to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and a crusade director for the Leighton Ford Crusades. He has been active in Christian Endeavor all his life in Australia where he served as National Director of the National Christian Endeavor Union of Australia before coming to North America. Mr. Pell and his family are living in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Topics FOR JUNIOR HIGHS

Leader's Talk

We are heirs of a great tradition. It will help us if we make a survey of the presence and development of the Holy Spirit. For purposes of this presentation we call this topic, *The Biography of the Holy Spirit.* If we remember that our meeting is directed toward something more than a casual get-together, added value and perspective will be furnished to us. Understanding or misunderstanding of the Holy Spirit is not new. Both promise and peril face us today. We shall see and discover the meaning of the Holy Spirit to our lives.

Helps and Hints for the Counselor

Why are so many so casual or confused about the Holy Spirit? How can we break through barriers of misunderstanding and gain greater knowledge of the work and Person of the Holy Spirit? This topic seeks to answer these perplexing questions in the minds of so many Junior Highs.

A deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit should lead Junior Highs to be more effective Christian witnesses and to understand their problems and hopes. In other words, this topic on *The Biography of the Holy Spirit* involves increasing Junior Highs' sensitivity and understanding of what the Holy Spirit is saying and doing through the Bible and in today's world.

Promoting Your Meeting

Junior Highs are studying history and geography on a world scale in school. They need to see that the Holy Spirit has been at work through the ages in the lives of persons and nations. Also, Junior Highs are at an age when the love of new experiences, expressed in the desire to know new and different ideas and be exposed to new expressions, will make a study of the work of the Holy Spirit appealing to them.

Finally, use good illustrations in color or black and white, particularly some of the symbols used for centuries to represent the Holy Spirit, as means of making the topic live for Junior Highs. Use some of these symbols on your publicity —postcards, posters, etc.

Topic 2 of a Unit: Understanding the Spirit

The Biography of the Holy Spirit

John 15:26,27; Romans 8:1,2,14-17

Know thou that every man is either empty or full. For if he has not the Holy Spirit, he has no knowledge of the Creator; he has not received Jesus Christ the Life; he knows not the Father who is in heaven . . .

—Irenaeus

For the Leader

Many different approaches may be used for presenting this topic.

1. Present a biography of the Holy Spirit, tracing His work from Genesis through Revelation (see *The Biography of the Holy Spirit).*
2. Make a study of one book of the Bible showing the work of the Holy Spirit such as *The Acts of the Apostles* or *The Gospel of John.*
3. Encourage the group to tell of experiences each has had when the Holy Spirit has given inspiration.
4. Lift out of the Bible, for special attention, helpful passages for Junior Highs as they seek to build Christian lives.
5. Suggest the memorization of portions of Scripture referring to the Holy Spirit.
6. Borrow a theological word book of the Bible from your minister for a detailed study of the meaning of the Holy Spirit.

What in the World Is Going On?

Points for a Prayerful Discussion

1. How can I get out of the traffic jam? There are all kinds of queer ideas about the Holy Spirit among some Junior Highs. We are the first to be misguided. Remember Simon the Sorcerer in the Book of Acts? He promised a free and entertaining show. The Holy Spirit is not sold at a snack bar. The Holy Spirit is not left to the whims and fantacies of a super salesman. The Holy Spirit demands both surrender and sacrifice on the part of the Christian. Let us begin our thoughts about the Holy Spirit with Matthew 28:19 and II Corinthians 13:14.

2. Although the Holy Spirit should be central in the Christian's thought and action, many are guilty of neglecting Him. He is referred to some 90 times in the Old Testament and around 260 times in the New Testament. We can clarify our thought of what the Holy Spirit does by tracing the development of His work in a glorious pilgrimage through the centuries. A historical review of the Holy Spirit will show that the Spirit is dropped from the center of attention when He has been lost from the heart of experience. The work of the Spirit is to revive our souls and banish defeat and despair. He gives life to dead skeletons and redeems the dry rot of formal religion.

3. The Holy Spirit is misunderstood. Confusion may lead to spiritual disaster. Satan attempts to hide the vision. When this is no longer possible, he tries falsehood. He attempts to turn the truth into deadly error. Paul indicates the marks of false teaching (II Corinthians 11:4). The Spirit warns us against counter-

(Continued on next page)

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Song Service: *Holy, Holy, Holy; Take My Life, and Let It Be; Softly and Tenderly*
Scripture Reading: Psalm 139
Prayer Hymn: *Just as I Am*
Sentence Prayers
Announcements and Offering
Topic Presentation
Discussion
Moments of Consecration
Hymn: *Where He Leads Me*
Mizpah Benediction

(Continued from previous page)

feits of His Person and work (I Timothy 4:1). When the Spirit is dethroned in our hearts, nothing but chaos can reign. Thus, our aim should be to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth (Proverbs 23:7).

The Spirit of Study and Discussion

The spirit of our approach to the Bible will determine the success of our efforts. What should be the right spirit of our society meetings and projects? When we study the Holy Spirit we approach the holiest of topics.

One application of Matthew 7:6 is that the Holy Spirit will not reveal His power and magnificence unless we strive to study and work with the right attitude. We must pray for more light and obey the light we have already received. Light apart from obedience is darkness.

Paul exhorts us to remember our dependence upon the truth of the Spirit for guidance (I Corinthians 2:9-16).

"The Biography of the Holy Spirit"

A Documentary Presentation

The Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit. We find the marks of the Spirit from Genesis 1:2 to Revelation 22:17. The Spirit is the life-giver of the world (Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:30; 147:14-18). The Spirit is the life-giver of man (Genesis 1:26; 2:7; Job 33:4). The origin of all life, the world, beauty is God the Spirit (Psalm 19:1-6).

Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35). The Spirit adds to us a new life (John 3:6; I Peter 1:22,23; II Corinthians 5:17). Pentecost marks the beginning of the Church of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28). The one divine Author of the Scripture is the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:21; II Timothy 3:16; II Samuel 23:2,3).

The Holy Spirit will share in the last creation. The new heavens and new earth will form the grand climax of all creations. They will form the Spirit's masterpiece (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; II Peter 3:12,13; Revelation 21:1). The last great act of the Spirit is to prepare the holy home for the holy Bride and Bridegroom (Revelation 1:10; 21:10).

The Bible is called the "Book of the Spirit." Every writing in the New Testament refers to the Spirit. The Book of Acts is devoted to the work of the Spirit in creating, guiding, and expanding the Church. Underlining in red all references to the Spirit in the New Testament would produce a "Red Letter New Testament."

Some Questions to Ponder

1. **Have you ever heard a sermon on the Holy Spirit? What did it mean to you?**
2. **Why is it so shameful and sinful to neglect the Spirit in our lives?**
3. **Why should we delight in the work of the Spirit in our lives?**
4. **Do you have "the mind of the Spirit"? Are you spiritually enough for the Lord to use you?**

The Blueprint for You

The Book of Genesis reveals God's original blueprint for our lives. It was necessary for Christ to redeem man from sin and trace over the blueprint again. The Holy Spirit continues the work of Christ in the lives of persons (John 15:26; 16:12-15).

The Spirit visited Gideon, Samson, Saul, David, and Elijah (Judges 6:34; 13:24,25; 14:6; I Samuel 10:10; 16:14; II Samuel 23:1,2; II Kings 2:9). The Spirit gave power to Joseph, Moses, and Daniel (Genesis 41:39; Numbers 11:17-29; Deuteronomy 34:9; Daniel 5:14).

Our fellowship is not with "somebody" or "something" but with God's very Spirit. In John 14:16,17; 15:26; 16; we have the Spirit revealed to us as a Person. The Spirit is at work. The Spirit is Holy.

Our Lord spoke of the Spirit as "Comforter." Augustine said, "He is our sweetest Comforter." He abides with us in our sufferings.

"Advocate" is another word used for the work of the Spirit (Romans 8:26, 27). Such a term means a pleader who comes forward in favor of, and as the representative of, another. Thus, the Holy Spirit pleads within us that we may not sin.

The Spirit is our "Helper." Why should we turn to human sources when we have a willing and all-powerful Helper. The Spirit is forever the "Help of the helpless." (Romans 8:26; Acts 26:22; Hebrews 4:16).

Paul refers to the work of the Spirit as "Witness." Who and what is a "witness"? A witness is one who sees and knows. A witness is used in court because he has knowledge of the case in court. The Spirit bears witness to our pardon, our adoption, and our sanctification. The Spirit is a witness to our growing likeness to Jesus Christ.

The Spirit gives to us the finished work of Christ. There are no more books to be added to the Bible. Christ finished the work of redemption. The Spirit continues or extends the truth of Christ to us. The Spirit instructs us in the truth.

When the claims of Christ challenge a person, the Holy Spirit burns the claim deep upon the heart. When a Junior High wrestles with sin, the Holy Spirit wrestles to win him to wholehearted loyalty and love to Christ.

When hatred, violence—evil of any kind—lays its claws upon a Junior High, the Holy Spirit burns deep upon the conscience and moves him to follow Christ. All of this is the work of the Spirit and the blueprint for our lives.

The Spirit works in various ways but remains One. In the Old Testament, the Spirit operates as a physical and material power. In the Gospels, the Spirit is concentrated upon one Person, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. In the Acts, we observe the power of the Spirit in the beginning and expansion of the Church. In the Epistles, the Spirit is the source of all spiritual gifts to individual Christians as members of the Body of Christ, the Church. In Revelation, the Spirit governs earth and heaven.

The Scars of the Spirit

Now is the time for personal commitment to Christ. Paul affirmed that he bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus. These marks were scars covering his body. They were his sufferings for Christ's sake.

Paul was proud of the scars upon his body. These scars were his medals and decorations received in battle. Paul was a soldier of Jesus Christ. He kept the rules. He did not give up. He held firm to Christ. He was faithful to the end. Paul fought the good fight of faith.

These marks or scars were also concrete evidences of his complete possession by the Spirit. He surrendered to the sway of the Spirit. Surrender to the Spirit means a cross. There is no room for the Spirit in pride and selfishness. Let the Spirit search and slay every unwelcomed evil. May the Spirit brand our lives with His marks. There is no other way to Christ-likeness.

Daily Bible Readings

M. Nov. 29 Access to the Father Ephesians 2:14-18
T. Nov. 30 The Presence of Christ II Corinthians 3:17-18
W. Dec. 1 The Sword of the Spirit Ephesians 6:17
T. Dec. 2 The Spirit of Truth John 14:15-26
F. Dec. 3 The Power of the Spirit Luke 4:14
S. Dec. 4 Greater Works John 14:12
Sun. Dec. 5 Topic: The Biography of the Holy Spirit John 15:26,27; Romans 8:1,2,14-17

Comments by Rev. Edgar L. Mack, pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal churches in Newport and Erlanger, Kentucky, and a member of the Youth Work Committee

The Open Bible for Everyone

(Universal Bible Sunday)

Nehemiah 8:1-3,5,6,8

Publicity

This study of the Bible comes at a time when everyone is concerned with Christmas gifts. Ask a bookstore to set up a display, possibly in your meeting room, of Bibles and prices for possible Christmas giving. Even though no sales are made, members may like the opportunity to look over various versions and editions, with prices, since a Bible makes an excellent Christmas gift for anyone.

If this is done, of course you will want to let members know ahead of time with posters and postcards. Provide cards and pencils so that they may make notes on editions which they might use as gifts.

Three Lives to Open the Word

Leader: How often we open our Bibles without thinking of the contributions of hundreds of brave, persecuted men who struggled to make possible our readable open Bibles. It would take us many hours to study all of them, but we shall look at three tonight who were especially important in translating the Bible into our language.

(Speakers should look in Bible history books and encyclopedias for additional information about these men.)

1. John Wycliffe, most often known as "The Morning Star of the Reformation," took a stubborn stand against the pope's right to impose taxes and appoint church authorities. He believed that the Bible alone must be the basis for belief. This teaching was considered so wicked that long after he died and was buried, his remains were dug up and burned as punishment for his heresy.

2. William Tyndale made such an excellent translation of the Greek New Testament into English that it served as a basis for our King James Version. While it couldn't be printed in England, it was later smuggled into the country. When authorities got it, they burned the manuscript. Tyndale was always being hunted by the authorities, and was finally burned as punishment for his translation of the New Testament.

3. Miles Coverdale, a bishop, completed an English translation of the Bible soon after Tyndale's New Testament was done. His version was well-liked and well-used for many years.

History Dramatized

In each scene there is a situation described by a narrator. Following this, two groups are to make remarks about the scene. *Group One* is usually pleased; *Group Two* is critical. At least two or three people should be in each group. The same groups may do each scene, or they may be different each time. If your society is small, simply divide the audience and ask all to participate. The groups should plan ahead of time on the remarks to be made, following the outlined suggestions, for it would be difficult to grasp these ideas at the last minute.

You will need four scenes, a narrator, and leaders for *Group One* and *Group Two.*

SCENE ONE

(A tall boy in a robe walks before the group. He unrolls a scroll.)

NARRATOR: This is Ezra, and he has come now to begin reading the book of the law to all the people. This is the scene of our Scripture lesson for today. With Nehemiah leading them, the people have rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. Now they have been called together to hear the reading of God's law, long neglected by the people who were scattered and in bondage. At a break in the reading, we hear the people whispering.

GROUP ONE: Pleasant remarks about the reading; renewed dedication to keep God's laws; hope for the future.

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Call to Worship: Psalm 119:33,34
Hymn: *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*
(note history of this hymn in relation to Bible translating and the Reformation)
Three Lives to Open the Word
Prayer
Scripture Reading: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5,6,8
Announcements and Offering
Hymn: *Break Thou the Bread of Life*
History Dramatized
The Bible and the World
The Bible in Our Country
What Can the Bible Do for Me?
Hymn: *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*
Dedication to Action: Committee reports and decisions for action
Closing Prayer
Benediction

GROUP TWO: Grumbling about wasted time; could be using time to rebuild buildings; feeling that they were keeping the law well enough; not learning anything new.

NARRATOR: The thoughts of these groups apply just as well today as long ago. Are you attentive when the Bible is read? Or would you rather be doing something else? At each reading of the Bible, do you check your own actions with God's laws? Or do you feel you know all you need to know about it? Are you really interested in an open Bible? Or do you show by your actions that you don't really care?

SCENE TWO

(A boy dressed as a priest in a black robe sits at a table, making notes as he reads a large Bible. If you can obtain a Latin Bible, he might read aloud a sentence or two.)

NARRATOR: Our scene changes to medieval times. God's Word has been complete for hundreds of years. But few people can read or write. And even those who know their native language can not read the Latin of the Bible. They must depend on the priest to explain God's Word and Jesus' teachings to them.

GROUP ONE: Remarks about their good fortune in having a priest to explain the Bible; concern about keeping all the detailed laws set up by Rome; conscientious discussion of taxes to be paid.

GROUP TWO: Discussion that a priest at another church has told the people some different things; wondering what the Bible really says about it; complaints that Rome is always asking for money and giving orders.

NARRATOR: Now let us bring this long-ago scene down to our day. Do you take someone's word about what the Bible says? Or do you read it for yourself? Do you follow rules because someone tells you to? Or do you look in God's Word and follow His rules?

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SCENE THREE

(Two soldiers in official-looking foil helmets and swords lead man in a poor robe, bound with ropes and chains. They walk across the front of the room, then leave.)

NARRATOR: Who is this poor criminal who is being punished so severely? He is a scholar who was translating the Bible into the native language. Perhaps this does not seem wicked to you, but it was a serious crime in those days, and the man might very well be burned at the stake.

GROUP ONE: Remarks about the wicked man; why would anyone try to translate the Bible when the Church at Rome forbids it; who needs to read the Bible anyway when the church tells you what it says?

GROUP TWO: Pity for the man; would rather like to see what he writes; can't see that the meaning would be changed by translation; notice that other books are translated all the time.

NARRATOR: Today we have the Bible printed in our language. Do you really study it for yourself? Or do you still depend on other people to tell you what it says? Today there are hundreds of missionaries working to translate the Bible into languages that still do not have it. Do we provide support, and interest, and prayers for these people? Is it just as important today, to translate the Bible into new languages as it was long ago?

SCENE FOUR

(On a table in the front of the room place a large Bible and a chain. A boy in a ragged robe comes in and turns a few pages, shakes his head, and leaves.)

NARRATOR: The scene is still a medieval one. You'll see, however, that this church does have an open Bible. A copy is very valuable, and it must be chained inside the church to keep it safe. Although anyone can open it, not many can read it, for there is still no general education of the people.

GROUP ONE: Remarks about the honor of having a Bible in their church; the pretty illustrations, the neat lettering; concern with protecting it.

GROUP TWO: Wishful thoughts that more people could read it; wondering if children can be taught; wish to have copies at home.

NARRATOR: A man who could read might make frequent trips to read the Bible chained in his church. Do you look that often at the one in your room? Education for the general public began because people wanted to be able to read the Bible. Do you spend as much time in Bible reading as in reading other less important things?

The Bible and the World

(Display a large world map. Provide speakers with pins to stick at the places in the world with which their talks are concerned. Also provide bulletin board space for newspaper clippings.)

1. AFRICA. The political upheavals and turmoil of Africa seemed faraway to us, until we found that American missionaries were killed in some of the brutal slaughter. The few missionaries we have sent to Africa have not been able to provide education, ideals, morality, and brotherly love to millions of people. (Display recent newspaper clippings about situations in Africa.)

The Bible is not an open book in Africa because there are so few of them, and so few who can read them. An open Bible, studied and understood, could bring orderly government and constructive change. It could bring brotherly love and peaceful solutions. Without this, who can see a solution to the problems?

2. ASIA. (Display clippings on war, border incidents, unrest in general.) The people of Asia face bitter little wars provoked by atheistic Communist powers that outlaw religion and the Bible. The open Bible alone could give these people what they need: spiritual food, security, a God who loves them. We can try, as a powerful nation, to do something to help them; but we can only pray that eventually the Bible may be opened and the wars cease.

3. EUROPE. Millions of Iron Curtain people are now prisoners from the rest of the world. They live in countries where the government tries to be their god, and government rules are their bible. (Display clippings about the Berlin wall, and conditions in Iron Curtain countries.) An open Bible could have told the people a better way to find what they wanted. But not enough people read the Bible or believed it, in the days when it was open.

4. SOUTH AMERICA. (Display clippings about conditions in Cuba and recent revolts in South America.) The constant revolts and the oppressed lives of millions of people have been brought close to us by recent events in Cuba. Many of these people have lived with a church much like that of medieval times. The Bible has been there, but they have not felt free to study and understand. Now they are not free to live as they choose or where they choose or even to eat as they choose.

5. NORTH AMERICA. (Display newspaper clippings showing concern with morality and crime.) We must look at ourselves also, and we must realize that it is useless for the Bible to be open unless someone looks at it. The materialism and pleasure-seeking aspects of our life make it obvious that Bible values have often disappeared. And are there not people who would hesitate to open the Bible because they might be laughed at and ridiculed by their friends?

Discussion: The Bible in Our Country

1. America was settled by people who insisted on their right to interpret the Bible for themselves. The Bible had to be opened frequently and at length. It had to be read aloud in groups and alone by individuals. This was the practice through the early years of our country's settlement. How often today is the Bible read in groups that meet together? Do you think it should be more often?

2. Schooling for all of us is the result of this determination. In order to interpret the Bible for oneself, one must be able to read it. Children were taught to read for this reason. Our fabulous educational system has grown from this simple desire for Bible study; yet today in many classrooms the Bible cannot be read at all. What do you think about the move to ban the Bible from the classroom?

3. The individual interpretation of the Scriptures and ability to read brought about a democratic government in our nation that was the most unique in the world. Because people were taught to think for themselves, they could also vote and govern themselves. Do you think there is enough emphasis today on the historical significance of religion in our nation's political history?

What Can the Bible Do for Me?

(Place a large mirror in the front of the room. Ask the speaker to face the mirror, back to audience, and try to show by his expression the characteristic he is describing. If he can speak loudly enough, have him talk into the mirror rather than facing the audience.)

1. Are you frequently bewildered? You wish you knew how to feel at ease. You wish you knew how to act in a certain situation. Then open the Bible. Read God's Word. It can give you assurance and confidence. The Bible will tell you how God wants you to live. Then you'll know what's right to do. You won't have to be bewildered.

2. Do you worry over making decisions? Do you stew and fret and wonder what to do? Then open your Bible. It contains rules for living. Jesus told us all that we need to know. Just read His teachings. Apply them to each decision that comes along. The answer will be there. You won't have to worry and wonder.

3. Are you insecure and uncertain? Do you feel uncomfortable with certain people? Do you worry about what will happen tomorrow? Then open your Bible. It is the Word of Power. It will give you the security of Jesus, whose Word is good forever. It will give you the Power to be right and to be comfortable and to be certain in all situations. Read the Bible. You won't have to squirm and wonder.

Daily Bible Readings

M. Dec. 6 Keep the Bible Open Psalm 119:9-16
T. Dec. 7 Knowing and Doing God's Will Luke 8:4-17
W. Dec. 8 Rules for Living Romans 12:9-21
T. Dec. 9 The Word of Power Luke 4:32
F. Dec. 10 Scripture Is Inspired II Timothy 3:10-17
S. Dec. 11 A Book of Power II Timothy 4:1-5
Sun. Dec. 12 Topic: The Open Bible for Everyone Nehemiah 8:1-3,5,6,8
(Universal Bible Sunday)

Comments by Mrs. Albert Ferntheil of Cincinnati, Ohio, a free-lance writer and editor

"No Christmas!"

(Christmas Sunday)
Luke 2:7; John 1:11

For Publicity and Promotion

An attractive poster can be made by pasting a strip of paper bearing the words "No Christmas" over a picture of a Christmas tree or other Yuletide scene depicting Christmas. Include the date, time, and place of the meeting. At this time of year when parties are being planned and the festivities usually associated with Christmas are all around us, don't forget to invite your friends to your meeting and share with them the true meaning of Christmas.

For the Leader or Counselor

This topic should lead Junior Highs to decide upon the best ways for Christians to celebrate and observe Christmas. The celebration of Christmas should help Junior Highs to think more seriously about ways to make God's love real in their lives. This is a time of gladness and joy. Sometimes our exuberance completely overshadows the true meaning of Christmas and we can think of little or nothing else but receiving gifts, having time off from school, and having plenty of good things to eat. But we will want to remind our Junior Highs that Christmas should not be remembered only for one day, but should remain alive in our conscience throughout the entire year. It is the day we celebrate by custom of the birth of the Saviour and it is upon Him that we should focus our adoration and worship. Only those Christmas hymns found in *Christian Endeavor Songs* have been included in this program, with the exception of the suggestion for a solo.

An Attractive Meeting

Since this will be the last Sunday prior to Christmas and will be observed as "Christmas Sunday," it might be well to plan this meeting as a birthday celebration. The room should be thoughtfully decorated. A small Christmas tree with ornaments and tinsel should be at the front of the room and a picture of Christ nearby, surrounded with green boughs. If the leader thinks it inappropriate to sing *Happy Birthday, Dear Jesus,* the following verse may be substituted as an unison spoken tribute:

Happy returns on the day of Thy birth,
May sunshine and gladness be given,
And may the dear Father prepare us on Earth
For a beautiful birthday in Heaven.
Amen.

This should be done following the topic *Christmas Everyday* at which point the lights in the room can be extinguished and the remainder of the program carried out by candlelight. Also, the lights on the Christmas tree may be turned on at this point since the thoughts in the program will have developed from "No Christmas" (darkness) to "Christmas Everyday" (light). Refreshments may be served at the discretion of the leader.

If resources permit, costumes of different countries could be worn by those designated beforehand as they tell the group how Christmas is celebrated in the country they represent. A few synopses are given in the section *Christmas in Other Lands.*

Talks on the Topic

What Is Christmas?

Among other things it is the giving of God to man in the giving of His Son, Jesus Christ, that we might have life and have it more abundantly. The yearly Christmas festivities are anniversary celebrations and remembrances of that one gift of God to mankind nearly two-thousand years ago. But is this true in the lives of all who would celebrate at this time of year? No, we are sorry to say.

Christmas actually means "The Mass of Christ," that is, a religious observance with sacraments and reverence, that the Peace of God may descend upon all those who partake of it earnestly. It has become the most widely celebrated festival in the Christian Church.

The Dates of Christmas

The earliest and most persistently adhered to date established for the birth of Christ is January 6, the day also celebrated as Epiphany when Christ was first seen by Gentiles on the visit of the Magi, the three wise men of the East. Heretofore, Christ, who Himself was a Jew, had been seen only by Jews, and the early Christians contended that since the Jews refused to accept Christ, it was only natural that this date be accepted as the date of His birth. January 6, was also remembered as the date of the Marriage at Cana and the feeding of the four-thousand.

Christmas was not observed as a festival in the early church because of much confusion as to when it should be. Indeed, there were those who contended that the birth of Christ was altogether too sublime to be kept as if He were a mere King or Pharaoh.

Many dates have been offered on the date of Christ's birth, although most all of them were merely suggestions to coincide with other dates already established in the Church: March 25, the date of the Resurrection; March 28, the supposed anniversary of the creation of the sun, which typifies the Sun of Righteousness; January 6, (already mentioned above); and finally December 25.

In the beginning of time there were elaborate celebrations by sun worshippers when the sun, from which they derived the necessities of life, returned from its wanderings about the heavens. This marked the end of winter solstice and the days began to get longer again. Great fires were built to give the sun god strength and hurry his return. The date of this pagan ceremony was December 25.

When the church fathers under Pope Justinian finally decided upon a date to celebrate Christ's birth, they wisely chose December 25, since this heretofore had been the most important festival

(Continued on next page)

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Call to Worship: Matthew 2:1,2,10,11
Hymn: *Joy to the World*
Prayer and the Lord's Prayer
Responsive Reading: No. 11 in *Christian Endeavor Songs,* "The Birth of Christ" (Luke 2:8-20)
Story of the Opening Hymn
Scripture Reading: Luke 2:7; John 1:11
Announcements and Offering
Special Music: *Cantique de Noel,* or other suitable Christmas solo
Leader's Comments or Introduction
Talks on the Topic
Candlelight Service of Carols and their stories: *O Come, All Ye Faithful; O Little Town of Bethlehem; Silent Night*
Sentence Prayers
Benediction

(Continued from previous page)

to the people. Due to a difference in man-made calendars, however, the dates of the solstice and of Christmas have drifted slightly apart, solstice now occurring on December 21.

The first Christmas celebration as we now know it was December 25, 440 A.D.

No Christmas

The prospects of having no Christmas would certainly seem bleak and disappointing to all of us. Such a catastrophe did occur, however, in England just 321 years ago. It was during a time of political rivalry—a time when religious fervor had reached a feverish pitch in the revolt against the Church of Rome.

The power of the bishops of the Anglican Church had been destroyed and transferred to commissioners appointed by Parliament, controlled by Puritans who believed that the Church of England had not gone far enough in eliminating Roman Catholic doctrines or forms of worship. The Puritans followed a much stricter moral and religious code than that which generally prevailed at that time. It was during the reign of Charles I, who was hunted like an animal, deposed from his throne, and finally beheaded by the legions of Parliament under the military leadership of Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell, himself a devout Christian, believed that the truth of God could be reached by any man who would faithfully and prayerfully study the Word of God.

It was in England that Christmas had become much more than a religious observance. It had become a wild, sometimes unruly, celebration lasting for two weeks during which the great halls of the feudal lords were packed with all sorts of guests, invited and uninvited. There were singing, games, dancing, masquerading, much emptying of the wassail bowl, and revelers gorging themselves with an unbelievable array of food. The heathen aspect of these celebrations, which had lost the inner vision and meaning of Christmas, greatly displeased the Puritans. And so, they being in control of Parliament, passed a law in 1644 forbidding the observance of Christmas. Town criers went through the streets calling loudly, "No Christmas! No Christmas!"

Thus, for seven years, there was no official observance of Christmas in England until the crowning of the new king, Charles II, in 1651 who revived the tradition. England gradually found Christmas again and made it both a church ceremonial and a home festival.

We can have "no Christmas" now if we miss the meaning and spirit and motive of celebrating Christmas. We dislike admitting it but there are many who have hilarious times. But to them it is not Christmas—for Christ is not a part of their life! In order for us to have a true Christmas, there is the requirement, necessity, or perhaps the "qualification" that those of us who would observe Christmas rightly must have had an experience with the Living Christ. For others it is but a time of great festivities —not Christmas—because they do not have Christ in their hearts and consequently are missing the true meaning of Christmas. If our celebration is not centered upon the adoration and worship of Christ, we have "no Christmas" even when there is no law against it.

Read the poem *The Inn That Missed Its Chance* by Amos R. Wells (see the Senior High-Young People's topic for December 19, page 19). The poem was originally printed in THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD. It tells how one inn-keeper had "no Christmas" and missed the greatest chance of a lifetime —that of his inn being the birthplace of the Messiah!

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. What is the best way for Christians to celebrate Christmas?
2. How do you think Christ would have us celebrate His birthday?
3. What is the true meaning of Christmas?
4. How can I make God's love real in my life?
5. How can I observe Christmas every day?

Christmas in Other Lands

It has always been a natural tendency for Scandinavians to observe Christmas because of their northern location and traditional ties to the winter solstice. Their customs have followed them wherever they have settled.

Germany has always kept Christmas in the home and through attendance at church services. One of our favorite Christmas hymns, *Stille Nacht,* comes from Germany.

In the Netherlands and Belgium, the children leave their wooden shoes filled with hay for St. Nicholas' white horse.

But not all countries have ice and snow at Christmas time. Christmas in Brazil, for example, comes in mid-summer. It is characteristic of a summer festival because of the many flowers, fireworks, fiestas, etc. Their patron saint is called *Papa Noel.*

In Mexico, the homes are decorated with flowers and altars prepared with scenes of the creche. These commemorate the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem and are called the *Posadas.* They also have *piñatas.*

Yes, Christmas is everywhere that people permit Christ to come into their hearts. Can you properly celebrate Christmas this year? Have you permitted Christ to come into your heart? If not, receive Him this day!

Christmas Everyday

It is good that we have a special day or season of the year when we can call to our minds the gift of God through the birth of Jesus. It is also important if we are to make the best witness of our faith, that we, by our very lives celebrate Christmas everyday and proclaim to the world "Joy to the World! The Lord is Come!" Thanks be to God that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Christmas Hymns

Ever since the very first Christmas, in the small town of Bethlehem, music in its many forms has been used by lowly shepherds and great composers alike, to convey to us the joy and wonder of Christmas! Simple folksongs, carols, hymns, and oratorios have brought to us, through the centuries, the message of Peace on Earth to all men of good will.

The book *Christ and the Fine Arts,* by Cynthia Pearl Maus, will be helpful in preparing a presentation of "Carols and their Stories."

If a strictly musical meeting is desired, there are many excellent record albums on Christmas carols that could be used. It may be possible to use slides in connection with a study of Christmas carols or even selected Christmas cards from past years that tell the true story of Christmas. The Christmas cards could be projected on a screen with the use of an opaque projector.

Daily Bible Readings

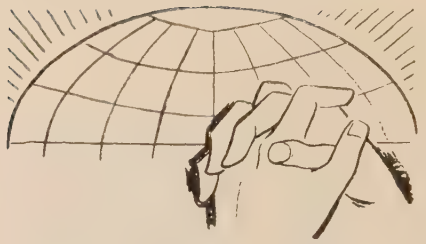
M. Dec. 13 Christmas Means Love Luke 2:7-9
T. Dec. 14 Christmas Means Salvation Luke 2:11
W. Dec. 15 Christmas Means Peace Luke 2:14
T. Dec. 16 Christmas Means Sharing Acts 11:19,20
F. Dec. 17 Christmas Means Welcome Acts 11:21
S. Dec. 18 Christmas Means Joy Luke 2:10
Sun. Dec. 19 Topic: "No Christmas!" Luke 2:7; John 1:11 (Christmas Sunday)

Comments by Preston T. Bowling, president of the St. Louis Christian Endeavor Union

Keeping Power

(New Year's Sunday)

I Peter 1:3-5; Jude 24,25



Publicity Ideas

A lot of attention can be drawn to your meeting by placing a cut flower on the left side of a poster and another in a vial of water on the right side. Of course, the flower which has no water will wither and turn brown, but the flower in the vial will remain fresh for several days. This will illustrate vividly the title of the program which should be placed between the two flowers. Include the date, time, and place of the meeting.

For the Leader

Now that Christmas for this year has passed, we will want to challenge Junior Highs to keep it alive throughout 1966. Here we stand at the threshold of the New Year. What better time to make definite decisions and resolutions for the year ahead! There should be no tawdry emotional outbursts, but sincere, God-inspired statements of intention from those who have given serious thoughts to the matter of New Year's resolutions. Emphasis should be made to point out that the Christian life is an on-going process and it requires constant nurture and care.

A branch that fails to bear fruit is good for nothing but to be cast out and burned. Just as the flower on the poster for publicity will fade unless kept alive with water and nutrients; so, the love, faith, and hope Junior Highs have today may fade unless the Word of God is kept alive in their hearts.

The Consecration Meeting

A consecration meeting or service, brought forth in the form of "Resolutions for Service" will suggest ideas to help keep a flowering life and the sweet fragrance of Christ in the world. Each Junior High should find the secret to keep his life from becoming like a fading rose. To keep the power of love alive throughout the whole year will mean putting first things first, walking in paths of service, seeking opportunities to express faith, and trusting in God.

Power in God's Word

Psalm 119:11—"Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee."

A specific time each day should be set aside for studying God's word. We can do this by following the suggestions for *Daily Bible Readings*. The person who diligently pursues the readings will find that he not only will read the reference given but will increasingly expand his interest and read those verses preceding as well as those following. This will give a more balanced understanding of the Scripture and create genuine pleasure in reading. We can always find time to follow the adventures of our favorite comic strip characters or watch with utter and devoted concentration our heroes on television. Why can't we find a time for Bible reading and prayer? A few minutes each day set aside for meditation on the Word and communion with God will bring us far greater rewards and be far more gratifying than any of our temporal pleasures. This should be given first place in our lives. It will be a wise decision to put this imminently important act of faith first in our daily schedule of things to do. When we have done this, everything else will follow in order of its relative importance.

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Call to Worship: Psalm 121:1-4
Hymn: *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*
Responsive Reading No. 10 in *Christian Endeavor Songs*, "Discipleship" (John 15:1-17)
Prayer in Unison: The Lord's Prayer
Hymn: *Saved to Tell Others*
Scripture Reading: I Peter 1:3-5; Jude 24,25
Announcements and Offering
Prayerful Choruses: *Let the Beauty of Jesus; Living for Jesus* (chorus only)
Leader's Introduction
Talks on the Topic
Hymn: *With Thy Spirit Fill Me*
Resolutions for Service
Closing Hymn: *Breathe on Me, Breath of God*
Benediction

It is easy to pretend to pray. It is so easy to fool ourselves with our prayers! It is so impossible to deceive God!
—Amos R. Wells

We should always be searching God's Word and praying that He will send a spiritual awakening, a revival, in our lives and in our day.

Keeping the Commandments

God has given us a list of the ten things He would like most for us to do. These were first given to Moses at Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:3-17). After the Lord had delivered the Israelites from Egypt, they traveled a day's journey into the wilderness of the Sinai desert. The Lord told Moses that if the Israelites would obey Him and keep His commandments, they would become "a peculiar treasure" to Him above all the people of the earth.

These commandments make up the basic moral law of the Hebrew and Christian faiths.

It is virtuous for us to keep the Ten Commandments even to this day. God made man free and gave him the commandments as a guide for his daily living, not to restrict his actions. We should keep them ever before us, not to hem us in, but to keep us free!

The same is true of the laws by which we live. They are set up for us by governing bodies which mean them only for our good and protection. We can remain free and unrestricted only for so long as we keep within the law. Think how confusing it would be if nobody paid any attention to the traffic signal! Of course, you can go right on through a red light (unless you run into someone), and so can everybody else, but try to imagine the confusion at that intersection! This is but one of the regulations laid down to protect us and is designed for our own good. It is virtuous for us to obey municipal laws.

God has given us Divine Choice. We can either keep His commandments, or we can break them. But think how much better off we will be if we stay within

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the bounds of God's Law. They were set for a purpose.

God is the same today, tomorrow, and will be the same for every day to come. God is not changing in the way He expects us to live or in what He expects us to be, and He has certainly not repealed the law of the Ten Commandments. Why should we ignore or rationalize when we have that feeling that God is calling us to obey His will? God has promised to strengthen and guide us when we follow His commandments (Deuteronomy 31:8).

Cecil B. DeMille once said, "We cannot break the law. We can only break ourselves against it."

Keeping Power

In ancient Egyptian religion, there was a miraculous bird called the "Phoenix." This creature was the embodiment of the sun-god and was fabled to live 500 years, whereupon it would burn itself to death, and would rise again fresh and young out of its own ashes. Hence it is often referred to as an emblem of immortality.

This same power can be ours today through belief in the saving power of Christ. He has promised that "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in Him, and he in God" (I John 4:15), and "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).

Modern science has developed a substance called "monosodium glutamate." That looks like a long word, but if you can say "supercalifragilistic-expialidocious" you can say "monosodium glutamate." But what is it? It is merely a chemical substance, which, when added to or combined with canned or processed foods, will prevent or retard spoilage. Thus we are able to keep canned goods on our pantry shelves for longer periods of time than we would be able to do otherwise.

This is the kind of keeping power we can have in our lives if we will let Christ come into our hearts. If we will let Him have pre-eminence in everything we say or do, and let His love and wisdom control our actions, He will keep us from "going sour," as the saying goes.

The Strategic Air Command (SAC) of the United States Government keeps a constant vigil in the air against the chance of a sneak attack by an enemy force. Bombers laden with atomic warheads are scheduled to fly 24 hours a day and to strike at an enemy target on a moment's notice. A country which is concerned about the lives and properties of its citizens must maintain a defensive position, while nonetheless harboring a non-aggressive attitude.

These are the defenses which Christ gives us when we are exhorted to "Put on the whole armor of God . . . having on the breastplate of righteousness" (Ephesians 6:13-17). There is power in His blood to free us from passion and pride, from a burden of sin, and power in prayer that this world has not dreamed of.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson said, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Martin Luther wrote, "Prayer is a strong wall and fortress of the church; it is a goodly Christian's weapon."

Pentecostal Power

In the life of the early church, Pentecost became the first annual festival to be observed. A Christmas and Easter celebration were not held. What happened at the first Pentecost is recorded in the second chapter of Acts.

If those early disciples had not received the gift of the Holy Spirit they would have scattered and their cause would have come to naught. They had the Gospel but they lacked that impelling power that sends all of us out as living witnesses of that which we have seen and felt. Prior to the Day of Pentecost they were timid and fearful; now they were courageous and willing to die for Jesus if need be. On the Day of Pentecost they learned nothing new about Jesus but they received a divine anointing which completely transformed them. They were different afterward and the world has never been the same. It is very interesting to observe what took place on the Day of Pentecost, but it is far more interesting to observe all that has taken place through the lives of spirit-filled men since that great day.

The Rev. Egerton C. Long has told the story about the woman in the buggy, whose horses ran away with her. Asked afterward how she felt, she said, "Well, I trusted God until the harness broke; then I shut my eyes and lost faith." How many of us trust God only while things are going smoothly, but when things get a little rough we think that God has forgotten us and we lose faith? But this is just the time when we must renew our trust and see God really work for us!

Just as our parents give us physical strength, so God gives us spiritual strength. We have a responsibility to witness if we know Christ. God will give us power. Those who receive it must testify to others. We see the Power of the Spirit in continued physical life and we know we have it in eternal life!

What's the Secret?

The Scriptures teach us that the moment we receive Jesus Christ into our hearts we have His power for spiritual growth. This conversion is not the end —it is just the starting point! We are to go on into a fuller and richer Christian life. Salvation is certainly not something to be endured; it is something to be enjoyed! But we will enjoy it only as we discover God's purpose and His plan for our life.

If we are to live a joyous and victorious life, we must discover what to do with temptation. Perhaps we were tempted just a few minutes or a few hours after our conversion. We should not be discouraged or think there is anything abnormal about a Christian being tempted. Indeed, Christ Himself felt the spiritual and mental anguish that comes with temptation.

We should remember that God never tempts anyone. Tempting is the devil's business! He very often uses our own natural inclinations and desires to tempt us. When we are tempted, let us ask ourselves: Does it glorify God? Can I do it in the name of Christ? Does it build me up in my Christian life, or hold me down? The Scriptures teach that God gives special strength and provides a way of escape for those who are determined to resist temptation. The moment we are tempted, we should immediately turn to God for help!

Daily Bible Readings

M. Dec. 20	Show Diligence	Hebrews 6:11,12
T. Dec. 21	Faith in God	Psalm 121
W. Dec. 22	Genuine Faith	James 2:14-17
T. Dec. 23	First Things First	I Corinthians 13
F. Dec. 24	Daring Deeds	Matthew 25:37-40
S. Dec. 25	The Sweet Savour of Christ	II Corinthians 2:15
Sun. Dec. 26	**Topic: Keeping Power**	**I Peter 1:3-5, Jude 24,25**
	(New Year's Sunday)	

Comments by Preston T. Bowling, president of the St. Louis Christian Endeavor Union

Hymns listed in program outlines in THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD have been selected from CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SONGS. This book, with an attractive orange and black krome-kote cover, contains 138 songs and hymns and 20 responsive Scripture readings for youth meetings. Available from International Society of Christian Endeavor, 1221 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43216. Price: 60c each, $6 per dozen, $48 per hundred.

Topics FOR SENIOR HIGHS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Topic 2 of a Unit: Understanding the Holy Spirit

Dry-Charged Christians

Acts 2

Advertising the Meeting

Several weeks ahead of this meeting, a poster should be made for advertising it. Use a "catchy" caption such as "Do You Need Power?" Other phrases such as "Learn what the Bible says about the working of God's Spirit." Or, "Are 'spiritual gifts' still in the Church?" could be used. Always keep posters simple but be certain that the date, time, and place of meeting are on the poster.

Moments of Consecration

Many societies make it a practice to observe the first Sunday of each month as *Consecration Sunday.* The consecration meeting gives an opportunity for the active members of the society to renew and deepen their dedication to the Lord Jesus Christ. The folder *What Is the Consecration Meeting?,* available from the International Society of Christian Endeavor (35c per dozen or $2.50 per hundred), gives many suggestions for various types of consecration meetings.

You might introduce *Directed Prayer* to your society as a variation during a consecration meeting. The leader suggests areas of prayer, pausing between each suggestion to allow each one time to silently pray for that particular area. Here is a suggestion for directed prayer:

Let us praise God for His greatness . . .
Let us confess to Him our sin and shortcomings . . .
Let us give thanks for each gift He has granted unto us . . .
Let us request of Him, our loving Father, those things which we need . . .
Let us beg His blessing on those whose burdens are heavy . . .
Let us bow in submission to His Divine Will . . .
Let us each speak a sentence of prayer around this circle, and conclude with the Mizpah Benediction.

Leader's Introduction

This is the second of two topics on the general theme of the Holy Spirit. Many times this subject is so shrouded in mystery that we tend to avoid a consideration of it. At other times, the topic is taken out of the context of the Bible and Christ as the center of our faith. As a result, many things happen that are not "decent or in order."

We cannot ignore the Spirit of Christ if we are Christians. The apostle Paul has affirmed, "But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Romans 8:9 RSV).

Being a Christian implies more than belonging to an organization, giving assent to certain beliefs, or even living according to a certain moral code. It means fellowship — a relationship in which two or more people share in each other's personality, but without losing personal identity. The power of the Gospel is a very personal power. It is likewise spiritual power as it has to do with man's thinking, feeling, and acting. But man's thinking, feeling, and willing often are immoral and destructive; therefore, man needs to know a Spirit higher than his. This Spirit is known as God, Christ in you, or the Holy Spirit.

Christians who do not know the Spirit of God are Christians in name only. They are easily defeated and soon become resentful and bitter. With God's Spirit we are in all "things more than conquerors."

Let us notice a few passages from the Bible and see what they tell us about the Holy Spirit. Turn in your New Testaments to Acts 2.

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Announcements
Call to Worship: Hebrews 4:16
Hymns: *In the Service of the King; Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart; Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*
Scripture: Romans 8:1-11
Hymn: *I Surrender All*
Prayer
Special Music
Presentation of the Topic
Discussion
Moments of Consecration
Hymn: *Rise up, O Men of God*
Benediction

Talks on the Topic

1. There are several truths in this passage that need to be pointed out. First, there was a miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles or disciples. There are two opinions as to whom the Holy Spirit was given. Some say the 120 that were in the upper room and others say the apostles. There seem to be three evidences pointing to the view that it was the apostles.

The first is that the proper antecedent for the pronoun "they" in Acts 2:1 is "the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:26). The second evidence favoring that the Spirit had fallen on apostles only is found in Acts 2:7 where it is said that "Are not all of these who are speaking Galileans?" The third is found in Hebrews 2:3,4 where the writer states, "how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, while God also bore witness with them by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his own will." (RSV.) The primacy of the apostles in the church is shown in Ephesians 3:5.

2. A second truth that needs to be pointed out in this message is that the giving of the Spirit is connected to the message of Jesus. The message preached centered in Jesus Christ and His redeeming grace. The Holy Spirit was promised upon their repentence and baptism (Acts 2:38; 5:32).

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A third fact from this passage is that the special gift the apostles received enabled them to speak "in tongues" so that *every* man heard them speaking in his own language. In other passages, such as I Corinthians 12:10 and 14:13, there is evidence that there were some gifts of tongues that needed interpreters.

3. A second passage in the New Testament that sets forth some teaching about the Holy Spirit is I Corinthians, chapters 12 to 14. It is important to note that there was evidently some problem among the Corinthians concerning the spiritual gifts. Apparently there had been some boasting on the part of some members because of the particular gift of the Spirit which they enjoyed (14:26). It is important to keep this purpose in mind in order that proper interpretation be given to any particular verse or verses in these chapters. There are several truths set forth in the passage that are important to an understanding of these chapters.

First, our simple commitment to Christ is assurance of a relationship to the Spirit. Paul has affirmed, "Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says, 'Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:3 RSV).

A second truth in this passage is that because one does not have a particular gift of the Spirit that this is not necessarily evidence of the absence of the Spirit. In a positive way one may have the Spirit even though he does not have the most popular gift of the Spirit. The possession of a gift of tongues or healing is not a sign of faith as gifts are given freely by God in His grace.

A third truth in this passage is that there can be the perfect in the kingdom without the gifts of the Spirit (I Corinthians 13:8-13). It makes little difference as what the perfect is to realize that the possession of any particular gift of the Spirit is of no great value.

4. What about these gifts of the Spirit as to their duration in the Church? Paul makes clear that these gifts of the Spirit were of temporary duration. He has stated, "Love never ends, as for prophecy, it will pass away; as for tongues they shall cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect shall pass away" (I Corinthians 13:8-10 RSV).

Questions for Discussion

1. **How do you really know that you are a Christian? (See Romans 8:16)**
2. **What can we expect will happen when the Holy Spirit takes possession of our lives? (See Galatians 5:22,23)**
3. **What assurance do we have that the Church can really accomplish God's will in the world today? (See Zechariah 4:6)**

Some today, claim to have these gifts of the Spirit. Whether or not this is so, is somewhat problematical. Especially is it so as the possession of these gifts is used as a sign of greater maturity and faith. This is the very attitude that Paul condemns in the Corinthian letter. The appeal to such gifts is really an appeal to imperfection rather than perfection.

It seems evident in the New Testament that the gifts of the Spirit were closely associated with the apostolic function. It is quite apparent in the New Testament that these gifts were given by an outpouring of the Spirit upon the apostles, or in the case of the household of Cornelius, to confirm the apostolic message; or they were given by the laying on of the apostles' hands as is stated in Acts 8:18. Simon was condemned because he sought to buy this apostolic power; for he said "Give me the same power too, so that when I lay my hands on anyone, he will receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:19 NEB).

Those that had received such gifts were to respect such as gifts of God and were to use them for the building up of the church. In I Corinthians 14:26, Paul has declared, "What then, brethren? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a tongue or an interpretation of a tongue. Let all things be done for edification." (RSV) The same concern is expressed in verse 5 of the same chapter.

5. A third and a very important passage to study with respect to the work of the Holy Spirit is Romans 8. In this passage Paul definitely connects our commitment to Christ with our reception of the Spirit. He has defined the life in the Spirit when he has stated: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit (Romans 8:5). In the sixteenth verse of this chapter Paul says that it is the Spirit himself that bears witness that we are children of God. The children of God manifest the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.

In Galatians 5:16-24, Paul couples being led of the Spirit to the fruit of the Spirit, not special gifts of the Spirit. If we are led by the Spirit we will love God and our fellowman.

6. The Church is the body of Christ —even though it is imperfect. If we are led of the Spirit then we should be concerned with the work and ministry of the Church above everything else. If Christian Endeavor is what it should be, then as youth we will express our spiritual concern through our commitment and service in the society. One of the fruits of the Spirit is faithfulness.

Do you express faithfulness in accepting and fulfilling your responsibilities in the Christian Endeavor society?

Another fruit of the Spirit is patience or perseverance. Can you be counted on when things are not going so well in your society?

Another consideration is that of motive for our service. If we are led by the Spirit, then we will render our service for the sake of Christ and His kingdom. In contrast to this do we do the tasks simply because they are easy to do, or to have some one compliment us? Do we expect service without sacrifice or even inconvenience?

As we talk of the Spirit, in essence it is that which thinks, feels, and acts. If we are truly led by the Spirit, our thinking, feeling, and acting will be in accord with the fruits of the Spirit. Such a life will indeed be a witness for Christ in a time when such a witness is needed.

Daily Bible Readings

M. Nov. 29 Spirit as Teacher Luke 12:12
T. Nov. 30 The Ephesian Believers Acts 19:1-6
W. Dec. 1 The Samaritan Christian Acts 8:1-17
T. Dec. 2 Sin against the Spirit Matthew 12:30,31
F. Dec. 3 Warning against Sin Matthew 3:2-9
S. Dec. 4 Withdrawing the Spirit Psalm 51:11; Genesis 6:1-3
Sun. Dec. 5 Topic: Dry-Charged Christians Acts 2

Comments by Dr. Lawrence M. Bixler, professor of Bible and Christian Education at Northwest Christian College, Eugene, Oregon

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Approved unto God

(Universal Bible Sunday)

II Timothy 2:1-15

Plan, Plan, Plan

The sooner you plan this meeting the better it will be. This is Universal Bible Sunday when emphasis is placed upon the importance of, and study of, the Bible. To create interest arrange for a display of Bibles of all kinds and sizes. Ask the members to bring their Bibles that are special, old, in another language, different versions, etc. for display. The display could be made for the church and Sunday school. Set up a table for the Bibles with cards telling the important facts about each Bible on display.

Order the folder *What Is the Quiet Hour* (35c a dozen) from the International Society of Christian Endeavor, 1221 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43216. Close the meeting with the signing of the Quiet Hour covenant.

Promote, Promote, Promote

1. Announcements! Make announcements everywhere you can promoting the meeting. The Sunday school classes, church, and in the church bulletin and the local newspaper.

2. Make posters with the Bible sketched or pasted on the poster. Use captions like: "Do you know this book?" or "Come find out about this book." Be sure to give time and place of the meeting.

Leader's Introduction

The word *Bible* is derived from the Greek word *biblia*. This word is the plural of *biblion* and is derived from *biblos* meaning book. The word was originally applied to the bark of the papyrus plant. This plant was used for making paper. It is a tall marshy grass with a triangular stem. The pith was cut in long strips and arranged crosswise in two or three layers. The material was soaked in water and pressed into a homogeneous surface. It was used for paper as early as the fourth century before Christ or perhaps even earlier. The word *biblia* was given to the rolls or scrolls and then applied to the book we know as the Bible.

The Bible as we know it today consists of sixty-six books. Thirty-nine of these are in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament. Some of the books bear the name of the author. Other books are named for the intended destination of the specific book, such as the New Testament epistles. Still others are titled according to the content like The Psalms or Genesis.

These sixty-six books were written over a period of at least 1500 years and more than forty persons shared in the writing. A few of them lived in the same period with their lives overlapping but most were separated by many years.

Some of the authors relate the things they experienced, as Matthew writes of what he saw Jesus do. He records the statements that he heard Jesus make. Some used earlier books and writings as resources. The author of II Samuel 1:18 refers to the *Book of Jasher* now lost to mankind.

In addition to drawing upon their own experience and research, the writers were guided by the Spirit of God. They were inspired men. They regarded the message as from God. "The word of the Lord came unto," is an expression found in many places in the Bible. (See Jeremiah 1:1-4; Ezekiel 1:3; Hosea 1:1; compare Revelation 1:10,11.) It is not the purpose of this topic to investigate the concept of inspiration but it is a study young people should pursue.

The Bible has been divided into the two major divisions of Old and New Testaments. Each of these are further classified according to the subject matter in the various books. The Old Testament has five books of Law, twelve books of History, Five books of Poetry, and seventeen books of Prophecy. The New Testament has four books called Gospels, one book of History, twenty-one Letters, and one book of Prophecy. The last part of the Old Testament was written about four-hundred years before the birth of Jesus. The New Testament is generally thought to have been written in the last half of the first century. Hebrew was the language used for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament.

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Prelude
Call to Worship
- LEADER: The Lord gave the Word.
- PEOPLE: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.
- LEADER: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.
- PEOPLE: Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

Song Service: *I Love to Tell the Story; Break Thou the Bread of Life; Only Believe*
Prayer
Song: *I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*
Scripture Reading
Song: *More Like the Master*
Announcements
Offertory
Special Music
Topic Presentation
Discussion
Hymn
Benediction

Terms and Texts

Here are some words you will want to know.

MANUSCRIPT. Manuscripts are documents written by hand. Before printing was invented this was the only way books could be produced. The task of copying a book by hand was a long and tedious one. There are no original manuscripts written by the authors in existence today. Copies do exist. That is, there are manuscripts copied from the older manuscripts and copies of the copies in existence. The term *manuscript* generally means those written by hand and in the original language used by the author.

VERSION. The term *version* means a translation of any document into another language. Some of the ancient versions were translated from manuscripts older than any now known. They help in knowing what the original writer had in mind.

PAPYRUS. Papyrus is a tall hedge or grass with a smooth triangular stem. The pith of which is used for making paper.

PARCHMENT. Parchment is a writing material made from skins of animals. Goat and sheep skins were frequently used.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS. In 1947 two shepherd boys were watching goats near Khirbet on the west shore of the Dead Sea and they saw a hole in the rocks. It led to a cave in which were eight clay jars. These contained manuscripts. More searching subsequently followed and more than 200 caves were examined. A large number of potsherds (fragments of broken pottery) and Biblical and liturgical manuscripts were found. They were written in Hebrew and Aramaic and by hand. A complete scroll of Isaiah as well as a large number of scripture portions were found. Scholars are still at work with translation and determining the meaning of the scrolls as well as who copied them and placed them in the caves. These are the oldest Scripture portions known to exist. These portions help confirm the accuracy of the Bible as we have it.

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The oldest New Testament manuscripts now in existence were copied in the early part of the fourth century. Only two known manuscripts are of this age. They are called the Sianitic and the Vatican manuscripts.

THE SIANITIC MANUSCRIPT was discovered in 1844, in a monastery located at the foot of Mount Sinai. It is from this that it derives its name. It is today displayed in the British Museum.

THE VATICAN MANUSCRIPT was placed in the Library of the Vatican soon after the library was established in 1848.

THE ALEXANDRIAN MANUSCRIPT was copied around 400 A.D. or a little later and is today in the British Museum. The patriarch of Constantinople got it from Alexandria, Egypt and then at a later date, 1628, gave it to Charles I.

Hundreds of other manuscripts and fragments are in existence. Some go as far back as the fifth century. Others are later copies of early documents. Those who copied the manuscripts were not inspired as were the original writers. There were errors that appeared in the copying. By comparison of the various manuscripts, most of the mistakes, if not all, have been corrected. In a few instances it cannot be determined what the writer intended. None of these cases have any bearing on our Christian faith or life.

The oldest version of the Old Testament is the *Septuagint.* The word is Latin and means *seventy.* It was so called because the translation was done by 70 Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt. The work was done about 250 B.C. They used Hebrew manuscripts older than those we now know. This version helps us know what the original writers wrote.

There were also ancient versions of the Old Testament in Syriac, Egyptian, Ethiopic, Armenian, and other languages. Perhaps as early as the first half of the second century A.D., there was a translation of the entire Bible in the Syriac. Not much later there was a Latin version. Around 400 A.D. a more careful Latin version was produced called the Vulgate. This word means common or popular. This version became the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church and Western Europe.

In the third and fourth centuries, there were versions in the Coptic (Egyptian), Gothic, and Armenian. These were translated from very early manuscripts now lost. These versions have been helpful in making sure the Bible we have is the same as the original writings.

The English Bible

Since most of us who will be using this topic are English speaking we will be interested in the English version of the Bible. One of the languages from which English developed was Anglo-Saxon. In the year 735, the Venerable Bede, though on the point of death, finished his translation of John's Gospel into Anglo-Saxon. About 900, King Alfred translated portions of the Bible. Following the Norman conquest led by William the Conqueror, the Anglo-Saxon language was blended with French to become what is usually known as Middle English.

Around 1380, Wycliffe, with a group of helpers, translated the Bible into Middle English. Because the Latin Vulgate was the official Bible of the time it was used as the source for the Middle English version. The older Greek and Hebrew manuscripts were not used. The effort to make the Bible available to the common man was opposed by church officials and government alike. When William Tyndale sought permission from the Bishop of London to make a translation into the English of the day he was promptly refused. There was no place in London or England he could do his work so he went to Germany in 1524 and there translated the Bible into English. He used the Vulgate and the Greek and Hebrew as source material.

The printing press was now available and Tyndale traveled to Worms where in 1526, the first printing of the New Testament was completed. It was condemned by the church and royal authorities and they commanded that the copies be burned. However many copies were smuggled into England and read. Tyndale was harassed and followed by spies till he was finally convicted of heresy and condemned to death. He was burned at the stake October 6, 1536, near Brussels crying with his last strength, "Lord, open the eyes of the King of England." This is only one indication of the tremendous cost of having the Bible available to everyone in his own language.

The popular demand for the Bible was so strong in England that finally Henry VIII approved a translation made by Myles Coverdale in 1535. Coverdale relied mainly upon the Latin Vulgate and Luther's German translation and possibly used Tyndale's work. Other translations followed which were all influenced by the monumental work of Tyndale.

"Bloody Mary" Tudor came to England's throne and under her efforts to make the nation Roman Catholic, some of the finest scholars fled to Europe. There they produced a revised English version called the *Geneva Bible.* They dedicated this in 1560 to England's new Queen Elizabeth. Some of the notes in the margin of the *Geneva Bible* offended the bishops of the Church of England so they produced in 1568, a version of their own known as the *Bishops' Bible.* Most of the clergymen used the *Bishops' Bible* but the people preferred the *Geneva Bible.*

In 1604, King James of England appointed a committee of fifty-four scholars and charged them with the task of preparing a new version in the English language. They used the *Bishops' Bible* other English versions, the German, Greek, and Hebrew texts, The Syriac, the Septuagint, and several Latin versions in their work. The result was the *King James Version* published in 1611, and it is still the most used Bible in the English language.

Language is constantly changing. New words come into being. Old ones change their meaning so the King James language of 1611 has changed. Such words as "let," "charity," and "wist" have changed or dropped from common usage. "Let" formerly meant to hinder now it is to permit (Romans 1:13). "Charity" meant to the 17th century Englishmen what we mean by our word "love." "Wist" has dropped from our present day conversation. Later English versions came in profusion. Some were done by individuals and some by committees.

The *Revised Standard Version* was produced by a committee of American scholars and published in 1952. An English committee in Britain released a version of the New Testament in 1961; the Old Testament will follow. These later versions have been based upon earlier English Bibles and diligently compared with all of the other versions and ancient manuscripts.

The modern man has a great heritage in the Bible. Untold lives have gone into making it available for us today. The Bible as God's word has a message for all men. As the word of God it has authority for the lives of people. God is the creator of all things. He has all knowledge and is all powerful. Redemption comes from Him. His commands and His grace are described in the Bible. The Bible is His way of making known His will for man. The Bible is a special revelation in that it tells us of things we do not learn from other sources. The Bible tells us of the nature of God. (See Genesis 17:1; John 3:16.) The Bible tells of the origin of things. (See Genesis 1:1.; John 1:1-3.) The Bible tells of the duty of man. (See Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:1; 7:29.)

This Book tells the destiny of man and of the world. (See Mark 16:15; II Peter 3:10-14; Revelation 21:1-22:7.) Despite the long period the Bible was in the making and the more than forty persons that shared in writing it, the book is characterized by a singular unity. The harmony of the Bible has been the marvel of students of every age. The thread of the redemptive love of God runs through the book like a scarlet cord through a rope. It tells of man's rebellion, his fall, God's love, His redemptive plan, and relates His dealings with people. The Bible is completely honest. It never fails to tell truth. The evils of men are recorded with impartiality. The good things are there, too. It is the guide, the comfort, and the strength of all who study it. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

Daily Bible Readings

M. Dec. 6 Bible as Food Deuteronomy 8:1-3
T. Dec. 7 Rich in Wisdom Colossians 3:1-16
W. Dec. 8 Sowing God's Word Mark 4:14,15
T. Dec. 9 Book to Be Read Deuteronomy 17:10:19
F. Dec. 10 Book Opened Revelation 20:1-12
S. Dec. 11 Book of Life Revelation 22:10-19
Sun. Dec. 12 Topic: Approved unto God II Timothy 2:1-15
(Universal Bible Sunday)

Comments by Elwood Dunn, general secretary of the Michigan Christian Endeavor Union and extension representative of the International Society of Christian Endeavor

The Symbols of Christmas

(Christmas Sunday)
Isaiah 9:6,7

The Inn That Missed Its Chance

(The Landlord Speaks, A. D. 28)
"What could be done? The inn was full of folk!
His honor, Marcus Lucius, and his scribes
Who made the census; honorable men
From farthest Galilee came hitherward
To be enrolled; high ladies and their lords;
As Bethlehem had never seen before
And may not see again. And there they were,
Close herded with their servants, till the inn
Was like a hive at swarming-time, and I
Was fairly crazed among them.
Could I know that they were so important? Just the two.
No servants, just a workman sort of man,
Leading a donkey, and his wife thereon,
Drooping and pale—I saw them not myself;
My servants must have driven them away;
But had I seen them how was I to know?
Were inns to welcome stragglers, up and down
In all our towns from Beersheba to Dan,
Till He should come? And how were men to know?
There was a sign, they say, a heavenly light
Resplendent; but I had no time for stars.
And there were songs of angels in the air
Out on the hills; but how was I to hear
Amid the thousand clamors of an inn?
Of course, if I had known them, who they were,
And who was He that should be born that night,
For now I learn that they will make Him King,
A second David, who will ransom us
From these Philistine Romans—who but He
That feeds an army with a loaf of bread,
And if a soldier falls, He touches him
And up he leaps, uninjured? Had I known,
I would have turned the whole inn upside down,
His honor, Marcus Lucius, and the rest,
And sent them all to the stables, had I known.
So you have seen Him, stranger, and perhaps
Again will see Him, Prithee say for me,
I did not know; and if He comes again
As he will surely come, with retinue,
And banners, and an army, tell my Lord
That all my inn is His, to make amends.
Alas! Alas! To miss a chance like that
This inn that might be chief among them all,
The birthplace of the Messiah—had I known"

—Amos R. Wells

Publicity Program

Distribute posters throughout the church. The theme could be "What Does This Mean?" Develop some in a humorous vein such as a hen with an umbrella over it with the caption "She didn't need to come out of the rain; it's dry under here." Then either on another section of this poster or on one next to it place a Christmas symbol and ask "What does this mean?" "Do you know?" "Come to Christian Endeavor." You could use any of the Christmas symbols which you intend to explain such as holly, mistletoe, bells, candles, Santa Claus, etc.

Also, to carry through in the spirit of Christmas, it would be well to receive gifts to be given to the needy. This could be for an orphanage or one of the inner-city neighborhood centers or mission for the down-trodden. Be sure and publicize this project well in advance. It would be well to have such posters up by at least November 28th, the first Sunday after Thanksgiving.

For the Leader's Consideration

The topic development contains a suggested introduction followed by general information on some of the symbols of Christmas. You may wish to cover others because of your interest or the interest of your youth. It is well to plan in advance and do your research extensively. You may desire to assign a different symbol to several of the youth and ask them to represent the symbol and ask them to do research on its history and meaning and what it means to the world today. Don't forget to point out the Christian meaning of the symbol. Much additional information can be found in the book by Maymie R. Krythe entitled *All about Christmas* (Harper & Row).

Leader's Introduction

Tonight we are going to make trips back into history and learn more of the symbols which are connected with our Christmas celebration. We may know what some of them mean today but do you know what they used to mean and who used them and why they used them? You will be surprised with some of the explanations behind Christmas symbols.

The most obvious Christmas symbol is that jolly old man who has become the center of many individuals' Christmas. You may say that he doesn't have a place in the Christian's thought of Christmas. Well, let's see.

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Call to Worship: Isaiah 9:6,7
Musical Interlude: Individual silent meditation
Hymns: *O Come, All Ye Faithful; Silent Night*
Invocation
Welcome to and Introduction of Visitors
Responsive Reading: Selection 14 from *Christian Endeavor Songs* (John 1:1-14)
Announcements and Offering
Prayer of Dedication of Offering
Special Music: *O Little Town of Bethlehem*
Scripture Lesson: Luke 2:1-20
Silent Prayer Period
Prayer Led by Leader
Hymn: *Joy to the World*
Leader's Introduction
Symbols of Christmas and Their Meaning
Presentation of Gifts for the Needy
Christmas Poem and Dedication
Hymn: *Since Jesus Came into My Heart*
Benediction

Talks on the Topic

Santa Claus

His name originally came from Latin: *Sanctus Nicolaus.* It has several forms such as the German *Sankt Nikolaus,* the Dutch *Sinter Klaas,* and then eventually our present *Santa Claus.*

We regard him only as a myth but actually there was a real St. Nicholas who was a Christian bishop of the fourth century. He was a bishop of great generosity and hence the emphasis on giving gifts has come down to our modern Santa Claus.

Nicholas was the only child of wealthy Christian parents in Asia Minor. Both parents died when he was very young. Young Nicholas dedicated his life to a life of service for God. He was elected to the high office of bishop. There are many stories about St. Nicholas' ability to perform miracles. Once he calmed the sea in a storm by uttering a prayer to God, and prevented the ship being wrecked. By prayer the wind forced, on another voyage, the ship back to land and thus prevented his being sold into slavery. He restored life to another.

The greatest legends refer to his giving to those in need. Perhaps the most popular one concerned three daughters of a nobleman. Women to be married had to have a dowry and these girls had none. When the oldest daughter was of the age of marriage he went one night and threw a bag of gold through the window and shortly after she married. When the next oldest daughter became old enough to marry he repeated the good deed. The father decided he would watch when the youngest became old enough for marriage. He did so and revealed it to all that Bishop St. Nicholas did this deed. He was then regarded

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as the patron of marriageable girls. In his pictures and statues, St. Nicholas is often shown with three bags of gold to represent his gifts to the three daughters without dowries.

What would you say is the meaning of Santa Claus as a symbol of Christmas? (Pause for answer.)

We could say Santa Claus represents the spirit of unselfish giving. That means giving when we don't necessarily expect any gifts in return. As God has shown His love in giving His Son so we show our love for God and for one another in giving at Christmas and Santa Claus might be said to symbolize this spirit.

Poinsettia

Just like the lily makes you think of Easter, so the very sight of a poinsettia plant forces your thoughts to fly to Christmas and its joy and happiness. The plant presents what we might say are the true Christmas colors of vivid red and green. It was most interesting to learn that the blossoms are not the red part of the plant but rather are the small yellow flowers in the center of each cluster of red.

Ventura, California is called the "Poinsettia City" although San Diego is the center of the production of the Poinsettia plant. The plant is named after its discoverer Dr. Joel Roberts Poinsett, who discovered it in Mexico in 1828. The Mexicans call it *Flor de la Noche Buena* which means *Flower of the Holy Night.*

Holly

Another item that brightens our homes and churches at Christmas is holly with its shiny leaves and lively colored red berries. It is sometimes used as sprigs as well as woven into wreaths. It is probably the one plant that grows in most countries of the world. The name comes from the Old English *holen* or *holegn* which was the genus of trees and shrubs with glossy leaves and bright red berries.

It is surprising how so many of our symbols of Christmas have in their history the instance of being held with suspicion and superstition. Holly is no exception. It was felt to have mysterious powers with the ability to protect one from witches and disastrous weather and thunder and lightning. Some held that it gave a person supernatural power and to wear some to church on Christmas Eve would make it possible to see in a vision those who would die in the coming year. Others said this was the burning bush which God used to attract the attention of Moses at the time he was called to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. Some feel that the holly was used to make the crown of thorns for Christ's head at His crucifixion. There is the thorny kind as well as the smooth and it was held by some that if the thorny type was first brought into the home at Christmas time it would signify the husband as ruler in the coming year. The situation would be reversed if the smooth type was brought into the home.

Evergreens

In reference to the holly and to other plants and trees such as the evergreen—pine, fir, spruce, and others, they call to our mind that they are always green and would speak of being forever alive. It would symbolize everlasting life in Jesus Christ. The message at Christmas is: Because God gave His Son to be born a man we shall have eternal life. We shall ever live with God. Of course there was the necessity of Calvary and Easter but even this is brought to our minds at Christmas with the thorny wreath of holly which calls to mind the crown of thorns.

Mistletoe

Now for the mistletoe. In Rome it was a symbol of hope and peace. When enemies met under it, they would forget their hate and put aside their weapons and declare a truce which would be sealed with a kiss. It is felt that perhaps that is where the kissing custom began. A girl kissed under the mistletoe was considered to be lucky. The mistletoe was believed to be a sacred spirit. It was respected as a healing power and was used for epilepsy and a toothache, and as late as 1952 it was revealed that a drug, a derivative of mistletoe, was used to reduce blood pressure.

Christmas Seals

We also have such things as Christmas seals. The money received from Christmas seals goes to help cure tuberculosis and also to educate the public. It is a symbol that surely represents compassion for others. Many groups including the American Bible Society issue Christian Christmas seals.

Christmas Cards

We use Christmas cards to proclaim our belief in the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. They are often used to reestablish our friendship with those who have been crowded out by the busy world in which we live.

Bells

Again, we have something that was used long before the coming of Jesus Christ. It was used in religious services in a variety of ways. The primary purpose was the calling of the people of the church and village to worship. It was about 400 A.D. when bells were first used on churches. Previous to this bells were used by individuals. May the bell ever symbolize our calling to Christ; and if we have strayed, to call us back again to follow in His Way.

Star and Candle

The star reminds us primarily of the "Star of the East" which led the kings of the East to the side of the Christ child as it guided them and then stood over where the child lay. It also calls to our minds the light of the world, even Jesus Christ, who gives light to a darkened world.

The candle used to be used as one of the ornaments on the Christmas tree. Then, as now it represents Christ who came as the Light of the World to lighten the pathway of those who walk in darkness. The candle has been replaced by safer and bright electric lights but the meaning of the symbol remains the same. Of course, the use of lights so reminds us of our commitment to Christ and our responsibility to be lights for Him.

The Creche

Creche is the French word for the nativity scene. It could be *Nacimiento* in Spain and *Krippe* in Germany. It is the manger scene which would include Mary, Joseph, the Infant Jesus, the shepherds, and perhaps in the far distance the three wise men. This certainly is the most important symbol of Christmas for it speaks of the Love of God for us. It represents a priceless gift that God offers to the world through His only Son.

Gifts for the Needy

We have studied the symbols of Christmas and behind most of them we find a message of the Love of God for mankind. Do we love God in return? We may show our love, for Christ said inasmuch as we do it unto others we do it unto Him. Therefore let us bring forth our gifts for our "Needy Project" and as we give to them so we give unto Christ and show our thanksgiving and love for Him. Let us dedicate our gifts with prayer.

Daily Bible Readings

M. Dec. 13	The Annunciation	Luke 1:26-38
T. Dec. 14	Mary Visits Elizabeth	Luke 1:39-45
W. Dec. 15	The Magnificat	Luke 1:46-56
T. Dec. 16	Zechariah's Prophecy	Luke 1:67-80
F. Dec. 17	Birth of Christ	Luke 2:1-7
S. Dec. 18	Shepherd's Story	Luke 2:8-21

Sun. Dec. 19 Topic: The Symbols of Christmas Isaiah 9:6,7

(Christmas Sunday)

Comments by Rev. Clyde E. West, associate minister of the Nelson Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Missouri.

A New Beginning

(New Year's Sunday)

II Corinthians 5:20

To the Leader

Decorate your posters advertising the meeting with color pictures from magazines showing foundation excavations and preparations for large construction projects. Or use color pictures of an urban renewal project with old structures being cleared away and new ones under construction. Print the topic title in large letters and include the necessary information of date, time, and place.

Make a special effort to invite college students home for the holidays and young people visiting relatives in your church.

The morality playlet will require few props. The characters will each need a card with his title on it in letters large enough to be read from the audience, and a string fastened to each end to suspend the card around his neck. On the back of the card should be his new name, so that he can turn his card over at the appropriate time: *Selfishness - Selflessness; Indifference - Zeal; Procrastination - Readiness; Laziness - Industry; Fear - Courage.* The players could wear choir robes or ordinary street clothes.

Leader's Introduction

When next we meet we will have passed into a new year; 1965 will have become a part of memory, of past history. In the new year we will have the opportunity to demonstrate the quality of our Christian lives. This is a time for stock taking, for thinking about the future and our part in it.

The attitude people take toward the passage of time is one indicator of the quality of their lives. We have probably all read Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death,* in which a group of selfish aristocrats seal themselves in a castle to escape a plague raging throughout the land. While death reigns outside, they celebrate their good fortune with a great ball. But at the end of each hour, as the ebony clock begins to chime in the black chamber, all the people pause uncomfortably, reminded of the passing of time and the inevitable coming of death. And death comes to that heedless, selfish group who lost their lives through trying to save them.

To the Christian, the passing of time and the coming of a new year represent new opportunities to grow spiritually and to work for the cause of Christ. There is an exhilaration in the passing of the seasons, the bursting of new life, the ripening of crops, the casting aside of the debris of past activity. Just so for the Christian, there is a joy in seeing plans carried to fruition, in watching children grow in their love for the Lord, in beginning new projects, and in opening new vistas for service. Tonight, as we prepare to bid farewell to the old year and its sadnesses and mistakes, let us meditate upon what we intend to do with the opportunities of the new year.

A Morality Playlet

READER: Ecclesiastes 12:1-8 (Soft background music, *Auld Lang Syne.* The "Old Year" and the "Christian New Year" enter together, "Old Year" leaning on a staff.)

OLD YEAR: And to think it started out with such high hopes. Such shouting and laughing. Everything so prosperous. Everyone so optimistic. And now it has come to this. Aches and pains and a stick to lean on. All the dreams of youth faded away.

NEW YEAR: What happened, Old Year? Had you no one to turn to for advice and counsel?

OLD YEAR: Ah, yes. Advice aplenty I had! Some of my counselors are coming to meet us here at the crossroads.

Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service
Prelude
Call to Worship: Psalm 40:3
Hymn: *Now I Belong to Jesus*
Opening Prayer
Hymns: *In My Heart There Rings a Melody; In the Service of the King; Sunshine in the Soul*
Announcements
Offering
Solo: *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*
Scripture Reading: II Corinthians 5:17-20
Leader's Introduction
Morality Play
Hymn: *Rise up, O Men of God*
Sentence Prayers
Responsive Reading of Consecration
Benediction

(Enter "Selfishness," "Indifference," "Procrastination," "Laziness," and "Fear," each with his name on a placard hanging from his neck. "Selfishness" pushes in ahead of the others. "Laziness" sits on the floor. "Fear" keeps looking anxiously over his shoulder. "Procrastination" lingers at the entrance. "Indifference" assumes a bored expression.)

SELFISHNESS: (to "Old Year") If only you'd showed more gumption and had stood up for your rights and demonstrated some intelligent self-interest you'd have more to show for your term of office. You have to go after what you want in this world if you're going to get it!

FEAR: Oh, you can't do that! Just the thought of it frightens me. Just the thought of *anything* frightens me!

PROCRASTINATION: Well, I think you have shown good judgment in not rushing into things. Don't go out on a limb, I always say. Why take a chance? Wise action requires careful thought. "Fools rush in," as they say. There's always tomorrow—or next week.

INDIFFERENCE: I just couldn't care less! Why get so up in the air over these things anyway? It just doesn't pay. Let George do it.

LAZINESS: (Yawning) Oh, oh. Somehow it just doesn't matter *who* you let do it, as long as it isn't me. (Falls asleep on the floor.)

OLD YEAR: I'll not lay the blame on them. It is easy to see now that I never should have fallen in with such a crew. But here we are at the crossroads. What path will you take?

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NEW YEAR: I take the path with Paul, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Farewell, Old Year! ("Old Year" exists to one side, leaning heavily on his staff.)

SELFISHNESS: And what about us? Are we to be cast aside?

NEW YEAR: If the actions of the new year are to be fruitful we must "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us." If you are to play a part in this race you must be transformed, made new creatures in Christ. To each of you the Word of God speaks. Selfishness must be transformed into self-denial, as Jesus said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

To Indifference must be spoken the words once directed to the church at Laodicea: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." The coldness of indifference must be transformed into the burning light of zeal for the Lord.

To Procrastination must be said the words of Jesus: "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." We must remember that "*Now* is the accepted time; *Now* is the day of salvation." If we hope to work in the Lord's harvest, we must behold the fields which are "white already to harvest."

To Laziness we would say with Paul, "It is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light."

And Fear must be transformed into such confident courage as that felt by David: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" This confidence in the love of God results in courage, as John teaches us: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because he first loved us."

Questions for Thought

1. What are some of the important tasks that the society should be concerned with in 1966?
2. How can these important tasks be carried out?
3. What are some of the individual tasks that each member should commit himself to accomplish in 1966?

Friends, we stand tonight at the crossroads; we must choose which path we will follow in the year which will soon begin. We have the opportunity to choose the upward path of service, which can lead us to greater realms of accomplishment as individuals and as a Christian Endeavor society. We have the opportunity to exult as Lord Tennyson did when he proclaimed his renewed faith in these lines: (Read the poem *Ring Out, Wild Bells).*

But, most of all, we have the opportunity in the new year to rededicate ourselves to our task as ambassadors for Christ, saying to mankind, "Be ye reconciled to God." Let us tonight place ourselves in the hand of God, that he may use us in the new year as His ambassadors.

A Responsive Reading of Consecration

LEADER: Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.

GROUP: (to be sung)
Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse, of Thy love,
At the impulse of Thy love.

LEADER: Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

GROUP: Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee;
Take my voice, and let me sing,
Always, only, for my King.
Always, only, for my King.

LEADER: The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

GROUP: Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

LEADER: Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.

GROUP: Take my will, and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own;
It shall be Thy royal throne,
It shall be Thy royal throne.

True Testimonies

I know now, looking back, that in the living room of my home that day, in the simple act of believing that Jesus died for me, the power of God's Word began to work. I saw, for the first time really, that a live, flesh-and-blood Person had suffered an agonizing death because of love for a boy named Robert Richardson.

In that moment a tiny flame of desire was kindled in me, a desire to know this Man, to follow Him, to show Him my gratitude. And though there have been detours along the way, that flame has never gone out.

Bobby Richardson in
THE BOBBY RICHARDSON STORY
(Fleming H. Revell Company)

* * *

I grew up in the country in a house high on a hill. We had air conditioning in those days! On cold winter mornings, I had to build fires. (Dad always went to bed when the rest of us wanted to stay up and got up when we wanted to stay in bed.) I started my fire with kindling wood. I did not try to set the backlog ablaze first. We have been trying to kindle revival fires with a backlog of unconverted and undedicated church members. We need to begin with our kindling wood—men and women and young people who are available, inflammable, expendable. Some may feel that they are too small and weak, but forest fires often begin with only a spark, God can start a big fire with a little kindling wood.

Vance Havner in
WHY NOT JUST BE CHRISTIANS?
(Fleming H. Revell Company)

* * *

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Christian martyred by the Nazis, wrote from prison that some unknown previous occupant of his cell had scratched over the door the words, "In 100 years it will all be over." Bonhoeffer commented, "That was his way of trying to overcome the feeling that time spent here is a complete blank," then went on to state, "My times are in Thy hand—that is the Bible's answer."

William P. Barker in
AS MATTHEW SAW THE MASTER
(Fleming H. Revell Company)

Daily Bible Readings

M.	Dec. 20	A New Heart	II Corinthians 5:1-17
T.	Dec. 21	A New Man	Ephesians 2:10-15
W.	Dec. 22	A New Creation	Ephesians 4:24
T.	Dec. 23	A New Life	Luke 15:20-24
F.	Dec. 24	A New Spirit	Psalm 51:1-10
S.	Dec. 25	A New Name	Isaiah 62:1,2

Sun. Dec. 26 Topic: A New Beginning
II Corinthians 5:20
(New Year's Sunday)

Comments by Mr. Charles C. Meek of Arcadia, Texas, vice-president of the Southwestern region of the International Society

Topics and Helps

FOR YOUNG ADULTS AND ADULTS

Topic Summaries for December

Prepared by the Adult Work Committee

The Adult Work Committee which prepared these summaries included Timothy J. Kribs, chairman; Rev. R. P. Carter, Wanna Sell, and Mrs. Roger D. Vander Kolk.

Bible Study (four topics)

1. The Seed and the Soil

Mark 4:1-20; Matthew 13:1-23; Luke 8:4-15

The purpose of this meeting is to have society members think about "how we hear" God's Word, and to give experience in group Bible study. The passages selected for study give Bible background for the question of how people hear the Word of God. The basic passage is in Mark. The passages from Matthew and Luke are parallel accounts. Leaders for the meeting should prepare in two ways: (1) Do a thorough study of the Bible passages, using commentaries; (2) Do preparatory study on methods of group Bible study and techniques of discussion leadership. A useful book for this type of preparation is *Learning together in the Christian Fellowship*, by Sara Little, John Knox Press. Lecturing should be avoided. The group might first study the passage in Mark together. Then a comparative study of the Matthew and Luke passages could be done in two groups (one group taking one passage, etc.). A sharing of the findings and a discussion of the implications of the different kinds of soil would conclude the study.

2. The Sword of the Spirit

Psalm 119:89-104

How much do the members of your society know about the fascinating story of the Bible? This meeting should explore some aspect of this great story. You can get background information through the nearest office of the Bible Society. Your church library or your minister's library may also be good sources of information. You may wish to deal with the early history of the Bible, telling how the various books were written and finally gathered together into our present Bible. Alternatively, look at the wonderful modern story of the Bible's translation, printing, and distribution throughout the world. For the meeting, try to gather a display of Bibles and Bible study resources. Old family Bibles, new English translations, and foreign language editions will all be of interest.

3. God's Word to Man

Hebrews 1:1-3; John 1:1-5

In our study passages from Hebrews and John's Gospel, we catch a view of the tremendous significance of the event of Christ's coming to earth. Here is a study for the Christmas season focusing on the thought that Christ was God's living Word to man. What was that Word? Search John's Gospel to find his interpretation of the message of Christ and the meaning of His life. The Scriptures are also called the Word of God. But this is only true in the sense that the Scriptures point us to Christ, and lead us to a true knowledge of Him. The Bible becomes the Word of God to us, only when it is interpreted "Christologically" and when the Holy Spirit leads us thereby to faith in Christ. This meeting should focus mainly on Christ as the One whom God sent to bring us the Gospel (good news) of His love and mercy (John 3:16). Use some of the selections from the first chapters of Luke (Luke 1:46-55, 68-79; 2:25-35; 3:4-6) to catch the mood of thanksgiving and rejoicing over His coming.

4. Remember

Deuteronomy 6

One of the most important words in the vocabulary of our personal Christian growth is "remember." The Jewish people down through the centuries have been sustained by remembering the mighty acts of God in bringing them out of Egyptian slavery and establishing His covenant with them. The passage from Deuteronomy makes clear the importance of their "remembering" and what they were to remember. At this new year's meeting, focus on the word "remember" and make a study of what Christians need to remember; use a Bible concordance. If you wish, introduce an element of group competition into the meeting. If time permits you may wish to look at the other side of this word "remember" and consider what things Christians ought to forget, or put behind them.

Discover "Bible Interests" to Improve Bible Study

MAN'S full possibilities and his great promise are not attained.

Our Bible pictures the heroism of individuals and groups, but a heroism frequently marred with folly, selfishness, and backsliding. This unmatched account of the Jewish people, God's gifts to and guidance of this people, and their heedlessness and disobedience extends over the centuries.

The sacred drama, proceeding through the life of Jesus Christ, His words and acts, His teachings cherished and remembered by a few, His sacrifice and resurrection, comes to us from many writers and in many styles.

And so it is not surprising that one's Bible reading, study, and meditation may center on chosen books within this Judaic-Christian library. To these books and even to selected chapters, the reader may turn again and again. So doing, he might well turn also to other portions of the Bible, to follow the calendar of the Christian Church, Sunday school lesson cycles, and in particular, the subjects suggested by the portions to which this reader goes most often. At this point, a concordance and the cross-references to verses in many editions of the Scriptures will surely prove helpful.

One of my own interests has been in *beginnings*. A perusal of a paperback like *Make the Bible Your Own*, by Ruth See (John Knox Press, 1961, 1962) helps me place Old Testament prophets in their historical order and setting—which differs from the positions in which these messages appear in the "library" of a printed Bible. This writer, or another, guides me as I emphasize the verb in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God *created* . . ." (this is the first great beginning, followed much later by the birth of Jesus, Palm Sunday in His last week of witness, the first communion or eucharist, the first appearance of Easter morning, and so on).

Will you find your personal themes and subjects, and trace them through the Book that has been instructor and guide for centuries? *B.H.D.*

Poster Deadline November 15

All orders for posters to be hung as part of Christian Endeavor's 1966 Outdoor Poster Program should be sent to the International Society by November 15. Payment and detailed shipping instructions must accompany all orders. This deadline must be met by union chairmen if poster plants are to receive posters in ample time for January postings.

85th Anniversary Year

Christian Endeavor Week

JANUARY 30-FEBRUARY 6, 1966

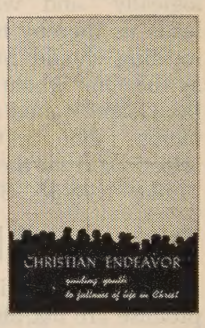
Theme: "Jesus Christ — the Way"

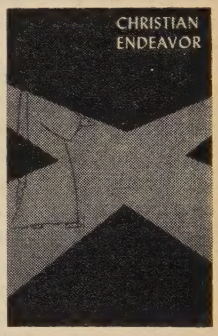
LET'S CELEBRATE

Christian Endeavorers around the world will mark the 85th anniversary of the founding of the first Christian Endeavor society on February 2.

The 1966 Christian Endeavor Week Packet contains many items to help with preparation and planning for a suitable observance of this significant Week.

The author of the Planbook is Rev. Walter M. Burkholder, general secretary of the Department of Christian Education of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The Program for Radio or Television has been written by Charles C. Meek of Texas, vice-president of the International Society in charge of the Southwestern Region. A "Hitchhikers Holiday Party" to help celebrate the birthday has been prepared by Mrs. Roger D. Vander Kolk of Michigan, former union president and regional vice-president.





Three special events bulletin covers are available. All give information on Christian Endeavor's program, purpose, and pledge on the back cover. The "Guiding Youth" cover (left) is printed in two shades of blue, the CE double hemisphere cover in red and black, and the "Christ and Crossroads" cover in red and brown. Specify design when ordering.

ORDER NOW FOR EARLY PLANNING

___COMPLETE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WEEK PACKET, full of valuable aids, ideas, plans ..... $ .50

___Christian Endeavor Week Planbook of suggestions, plans, resources* ..... .35

___A Program for Radio or Television* ..... .10

___Hitchhikers Holiday Party (mimeographed)* ..... .10

___Entry Blanks for Christian Endeavor's Citizenship Awards Program* ..... Free

___Bulletin Covers (furnished flat for mimeographing, to fold to 8½x5½)* 100 in a package ..... 500, $8.00; 100 for 2.00

___Napkins, 13½" square, with CE medallion in red, 50 in a package ..... .40

*One copy included in the complete Christian Endeavor Week Packet.

___The Christian Endeavor Story (a folder) ..... 100 for $2.50; dozen .35

___What Is Christian Endeavor? (an informative folder) ..... Free

___Life's Greatest Decisions (a folder) ..... dozen .75

___Christian Endeavor Essentials, the official textbook on principles and methods 1.25

___How to Win Youth (a folder) ..... .10

___How to Lead (a booklet) ..... .20

___Christian Endeavor Pledge Cards ..... 100 for $2.50; dozen .35

___Christian Endeavor Wall Pledge 2.25

___Publicity Plans for Christian Endeavor ..... .50

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